Rutilio Grande, SJ

Homilies & Writings

EDITED, TRANSLATED, AND ANNOTATED
BY
THOMAS M. KELLY

VISIT…

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"As anticipated, Professor Kelly does not disappoint! In *Rutilio Grande, SJ: Homilies and Writings*, Kelly astutely carries the prophetic and pastoral voice of Rutilio Grande to the North American landscape of discipleship. Kelly brilliantly does in this book what Grande did with his life as prophet, pastor, and formation director not only of nascent Jesuits but of generations of ecclesial ministers—lay and ordained. Together Grande and Kelly bring forward the kingdom of God through thoughtful analysis, a creative method of formation, and the eminent cost of discipleship required of all who take the Gospel seriously. *Rutilio Grande, SJ: Homilies and Writings* echoes Pope Francis's *The Joy of the Gospel*. It is an important theological, pastoral, and formative resource for people entrusted with the formation of disciples in the rich tradition of Catholic Social Teaching."

— Damian Zynda
Author of *Archbishop Oscar Romero: A Disciple Who Revealed the Glory of God*

"Thomas Kelly provides the definitive treatment of Rutilio Grande. He captures the spirit and texture of Grande's pastoral commitment and grassroots compassion the way no author has managed. This book is a must-read for anyone who wants to know about religion and social justice in Central America. Indeed, it offers valuable insights into the continuing relevance of Grande's pastoral-theological perspective for the church in the age of Pope Francis."

— Stephen J. Pope
Professor of Theological Ethics
Boston College

"Rutilio Grande was the first in a long line of Salvadoran martyrs killed in so-called hatred of the faith—that is, hatred for a faith that expressed itself in love for the poor. His witness inspired Archbishop Romero on his own road to Calvary. These writings, beautifully translated and edited by Thomas Kelly, are an inspiring reminder of what it means, in our time, to take up our cross and follow Jesus."

— Robert Ellsberg
Publisher
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"Thomas M. Kelly, the rising young Rutilio Grande scholar, here presents a second book on Grande, the first Jesuit assassinated in El Salvador on March 12, 1977. This publication builds on Kelly's earlier book on Grande, *When the Gospel Grows Feet*. Among the strengths of this new book is an even deeper understanding of contextual theology, which is essential for new and deeper evangelization in the church now. Professor Kelly also clearly elaborates on the key role of social analysis in promoting the new evangelization. But most important, as Kelly himself puts it, 'It is impossible to understand Romero without understanding Rutilio Grand, SJ.' I definitely recommend this book."

— Rev. Robert Pelton, CSC
Concurrent Professor Emeritus, Theology
Director, Latin American/North American Church Concerns
Kellogg Institute for International Studies
University of Notre Dame

Rutilio Grande, SJ

Homilies and Writings

Edited, Translated, and Annotated
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Thomas M. Kelly

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To Andrew, Michael, and Catherine

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Abbreviations

ANDES	National Association of Educators of El Salvador
ANEP	National Association of Private Enterprise
ARENA	National Republican Alliance
CEB	Christian Base Community
CELAM	Latin American Bishops Conference
CISPES	Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador
CONAMUS	National Coordination of Salvadoran Women
CONSALCO	A Salvadoran buying cooperative used by peasants
ECA	*Estudios Centroamericanos*
FAPU	United Popular Action Front of El Salvador
FARO	Paramilitary Landowner Organization against Land Reform
FDR	Revolutionary Democratic Front
FECCAS	Federation of Christian Peasants of El Salvador
FENASTRAS	National Federation of Salvadoran Women
FMLN	Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front
FPL	Popular Liberation Forces
GAM	Mutual Support Group
IMF	International Monetary Fund

IPLA	Latin American Pastoral Institute (Quito Ecuador)
Manzana	Measurement for Land, 1 Manzana = 1.73 acres.
OAS	Organization of American States
ORDEN	Paramilitary Force of the Salvadoran Government and Landowners
PCN	National Conciliation Part of El Salvador
PCS	Salvadoran Communist Party
UCA	Central American University
UTC	Union of Workers in Rural Areas
UNTS	National Union of Salvadoran Labor

Introduction

On February 3, 2015, Pope Francis was asked about the martyrdom declaration relating to former El Salvadoran archbishop Oscar Romero. Such a declaration would move Archbishop Romero forward in the beatification process currently underway to declare him a saint. In the Catholic faith, the traditional definition of a "martyr" is someone who died "*in odium fidei*," or for hatred of the faith. This means the person was killed for what he or she believed. When a Catholic archbishop is assassinated in an overwhelmingly Catholic country, it is probably not for his "belief" in the Catholic faith. Archbishop Romero was killed due to his *actions* relating to the faith, actions that were consistent with the gospels. Pope Francis was clear on this distinction.

> "What I would like is a clarification about martyrdom *in odium fidei*, whether it can occur either for having confessed the Creed or for having done the works which Jesus commands with regard to one's neighbor," Francis said. "And this is a task for the theologians. They are studying it."
>
> "Because after [Romero] there is Rutilio Grande, and there are others too; there are others who were killed," said Francis, referring specifically to a Salvadoran Jesuit who was killed in 1977 for helping impoverished people in the country organize.[1]

Following the publication of a book on the life, ministry, and death of Rutilio Grande, SJ, titled *When the Gospel Grows Feet: Rutilio Grande, SJ, and the Church of El Salvador*, I thought it would be helpful to share

[1] Joshua McElwee, "Francis Recognizes Oscar Romero as Martyr; Beatification Expected," *National Catholic Reporter*, February 3, 2015, http://ncronline.org/news/vatican/pope-francis-recognizes-oscar-romero-martyr-beatification-expected.

the written works and homilies of Rutilio that I was able to find while on sabbatical in El Salvador in 2009. My hope is to raise the profile of Rutilio Grande, SJ, because, while he was very influential in El Salvador throughout the 1960s and 1970s, he is virtually unknown today outside of El Salvador.

The following homilies and articles are a collection of writings from very different genres. There is an academic article, a pastoral article, a homily addressed to the leadership of the entire country, as well as homilies given to impoverished peasants in rural farming villages.[2] Rutilio's range and style in communicating the Gospel was extensive. My hope in bringing these works into English is to share the gift of his life with the English-speaking world. Faithful to the end, he gave his life for those he served, and he did so unselfishly. I think his life and death are worth understanding and exploring more deeply.

In preparation for reading and understanding the following homilies and writings of Rutilio, it is necessary to understand four significant changes brought about by the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). This background will explain the tension in the Church of El Salvador and the divisions among priests and bishops there during the 1960s and 1970s. The first topic of background knowledge is the shift from a "charity" model of how the Church engaged the world to a "justice" model. This was called for by the final document of Vatican II titled *Gaudium et Spes* ("joy and hope"; The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) in 1965. The second topic is the use of the social sciences by the Church to discover more about the world that it is supposed to serve. This is essential for knowing how to name and work toward the solutions to serious social, economic, and political problems. The third topic is the shift that occurred in the style of ordained leadership at Vatican II that is currently being recovered by Pope Francis. Priests were no longer distant "holy" people who were "above" the laity. Rather, they were

[2] This term "peasant" is the translation of the word "campesino." Some disagree with this translation as they understand it to be demeaning and discriminatory. I would agree that for the modern person, this is a pejorative term. But it is also clear to me that Rutilio really thought the poor of El Salvador existed in a feudal system, a system where people basically lived as "serfs." Naming them as "peasants" highlights the unjust system they are subject to. He names their reality as feudalistic himself in one of the translations provided here. To be true to what Rutilio thought, I use the term "peasant," but I also use the term interchangeably with "rural agricultural worker."

and are called to be "servant leaders" who bring forth the gifts of the people they serve so that communities can take ownership for the faith they proclaim. Finally, I believe the Catholic Church of Latin America has much to teach the Catholic Church of North America with regard to its reception of Vatican II. As "Catholic," we ought to look to the universal Church for models of ministry, faith, and priesthood that come from other parts of the world. I hope this will provoke us to question whether we are as effective as we could be.

Perhaps Rutilio can inspire a more prophetic Church in North America, one more balanced in its outlook and actions as it advocates for justice in a context increasingly marked by inequality, political vitriol, and libertarian economics. I believe this marks the current message and ministry of Pope Francis and I share the following writings of Rutilio Grande, SJ, in support of the current evangelization coming out of Rome. The four changes brought about by Vatican II and prophetically proclaimed by Rutilio must first be understood by distinguishing between charity and justice.

Charity and Justice

Most, if not all of us, have donated something to charity. We have brought canned goods to church at Thanksgiving or Christmas time or we have donated a meal to the homeless shelter. Some of us are quite generous in supporting services that meet the basic needs of people who are poor in our community. Charity is a form of giving that meets the immediate needs of those who are poor. Charity is always good but never enough. During the Second Vatican Council, the Church adopted a new way of engaging social problems—a way that has not really penetrated the Catholic churches of North America. It is called working for justice. Working for justice does not mean we should stop charitable giving—but it does mean that we should do more than just giving charity. While it is good and admirable to donate food, clothing, and heating assistance to those in need, it is also important, perhaps even more important, to address the reasons *why* people are hungry, need clothes, or can't pay their bills. Justice is the work of addressing the *causes* of social problems.

The difficulty with justice is that nobody can do it alone. One can give charity without anyone else involved, but justice requires one to work with others, in community, to change what are known as "structures" or systems. We all grow up formed and shaped by systems

that we did not create and do not control. Our education system, health-care system, legal system, and banking system are examples of "structures" that we all participate in and none of us are responsible for. Perhaps an example would help.

Imagine if you lived in the 1930s and you had African American friends. You treated them as you would want to be treated; you invited them into your home, ate with them, and socialized with them. Still, they couldn't eat with you in certain restaurants or vote as easily as you could. Their schools were much worse than yours and they almost never got paid as much as you did. Your individual response of charity by trying to help however you could to meet their individual needs would be welcome and helpful for its recipient, but you wouldn't change the "structure" of racism and discrimination without addressing the cause of the problem. You would not be advocating justice until you addressed the institutionalization of inequality and discrimination in schools through the legal system and political system. Only movements that changed laws and attitudes could ultimately address some of the causes of their suffering and poverty. And we are well aware today that many of those attitudes persist, regardless of new laws. The point is that social problems often require social responses. That doesn't sell very well in a society of individualism.

A commitment to social justice brings with it the realization that individual charity or efforts at philanthropy will not and cannot adequately address the root causes of poverty, marginalization, and suffering in any society. In some ways, they could even make it worse. For this reason, Catholic social thought views the role of the state positively when it directs resources and opportunities to resolve these kinds of issues. The Church has argued throughout its history that people should not require handouts or be dependent on others to live fully human lives. The ideal is when persons and their communities become agents of their own development. There are times when people or communities need temporary assistance to transition to this, but such dependence on others is neither desirable nor sustainable. Empowering people to claim their own independence and to find their own "voice" creates great conflict in societies where inequality and discrimination are entrenched. This was true in the United States in the 1960s and it has been true in El Salvador for many decades. The ability to understand this inequality leads us to the importance of social analysis.

Social Analysis

The commitment to justice requires an understanding of the causes of social, economic, and political injustices. Often these causes are deep within a particular historical context and not easily visible. This means that if a parish or diocesan community is involved in the work for justice (all Catholic communities should be after Vatican II), it will need to use contemporary social sciences to try to understand the reality within which it lives and practices its faith. The final document of Vatican II spoke to the necessity of this quite clearly. "In pastoral care sufficient use should be made, not only of theological principles, but also of the findings of secular sciences, especially psychology and sociology: in this way the faithful may be brought to a purer and more mature living of the faith" (GS 62).[3] This means that the catechism is never enough to the degree that pastoral care is performed. We need pastors and lay ministers in our churches who understand how to do social analysis for any given community to truly understand and respond to injustice in their own context. Rutilio will showcase his own efforts to do this through the ways in which he oriented and executed the two-year "Mission" he wrote about. He fully investigated the social reality where the Mission was concentrated, which happened to be the same place he was born and raised. While fully knowledgeable and educated in philosophy and theology, it was social analysis that allowed him to understand how the people understood God, "God's will," and the purpose of the Church. Through his social analysis, much of it shared in the forthcoming chapters, he learned what form and content of evangelization people needed from the Church. Perhaps a contemporary example of social analysis will help here.

The current immigration "crisis" in the United States is nothing new. Waves of undocumented human beings have entered the United States, mainly from Latin America, for decades. What is surprising is how little is understood about *why* people are fleeing their countries!

For example, in the 1970s and 1980s, the United States absorbed refugees from civil wars perpetuated by governments largely supported and armed by the United States like Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. A second example is that of the late 1990s and 2000s,

[3] Unless otherwise indicated, excerpts from the Second Vatican Council are taken from *Vatican Council II: Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations; The Basic Sixteen Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014).

when large numbers of agricultural workers looking for work emigrated to the United States. Unknown to most Americans, many of those workers emigrated because of free trade agreements like NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement). These agreements required the halting of agricultural subsidies by participating governments. Mexico had supported its own agricultural industry with payments to farmers and landowners, much as the United States has done for decades. When these subsidies ended (as dictated by the trade agreement), so did many jobs in Mexico. (The United States subsidizes its own agricultural industry with billions of dollars a year.) Those agricultural workers who lost their jobs went north looking for employment. A third example is related to the narcotics trade. Today we have "failed states" throughout Central America and Mexico, where drug cartels rule the affairs of daily civic life. Those same cartels are powerful almost exclusively due to the drug habits of many North Americans. We are the market for their drugs. Put together, documented and undocumented immigrants are moving north due to economic and safety concerns that we have largely created. When we understand even some of the causes for the various waves of migration to the United States, perhaps we can reconsider our current immigration policy.

It may be easier to call undocumented and desperate people emigrating from dangerous homelands "illegal" and make it a criminal offense to emigrate for a better life, get a driver's license, or educate their children. But it might surprise many US citizens to know that we have largely created our own immigration problem. We simply need to connect the dots and implement a careful analysis of the causes of immigration in order to do so. An immigration policy based on justice would always put human beings and family units first and address the causes of Latin American emigration through trade policy reform, appropriate drug policy measures, and through support of governments in Latin America in ways that extend beyond immediate US self-interest.

Advocating for a more humane immigration policy is just one way the Catholic Church in the United States has been active in social and political life, but many of its own members still don't understand the *root causes* of the problem. Imagine teaching people about the roots or causes of inequality, the fact that poverty disproportionately affects women and how we are failing our children, many of whom go to bed

hungry at night here in the richest country in the world! Educating ourselves about causes of injustice, even if we disagree on remedies, would go far to working for justice in our context and around the world. We have the tools within our communities to learn about injustice. We just need leadership that is willing to empower members of the community to contribute to a broader understanding; that is the essence of servant leadership.

Servant Leadership

While I was teaching a graduate course on Christian spirituality, a student once told me that when he was enrolled in a Catholic seminary, the seminarians were told that priests were "the Church on two feet." "We felt very important, even essential for there to be any sense of 'Church,'" he said. This phrase and its accompanying attitude represent what is known as "clericalism." Clericalism makes the ordained minister the center and "hub" of Church activity. His desires and agenda dictate how and along what lines a community develops, how the faith is taught and passed on, and who is empowered to "help." The danger of clericalism is that a community defers to the ordained person in power and never develops a sense of itself as an agent and owner of its own evangelization. What is at stake here is the nature of a community and its leadership.

For Pope Francis, clericalism "is one of the worst evils." He was emphatic when he noted that priestly formation "must form their hearts. Otherwise we are creating little monsters. And then these little monsters mold the people of God. This really gives me goose bumps."[4] It is possible that Francis is concerned about ordained leaders preferring Church law over God's mercy and thus becoming "little monsters." It is well known that he pronounced as "Pharisaical" the practice of denying baptism to children of single mothers when he served as cardinal archbishop of Buenos Aires.[5] This idea

[4] Bill McGarvey, "Pope: Warns that Poorly Trained Priests Can Become 'Little Monsters,'" *America* blog, "In All Things," January 4, 2014, http://americamagazine.org/content/all-things/pope-warns-poorly-trained-priests-can-become-%E2%80%98little-monsters%E2%80%99.

[5] "Argentine Cardinal Decries Priests' Refusal to Baptize Out-of-Wedlock Children," *Catholic World News*, September 6, 2012, http://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=15504.

of putting a Church "law" over the good of children is something he has no patience for. A form of Church leadership that puts the needs of people over the needs of its leaders is of critical importance. Rutilio was keenly aware of this in the communities he served in El Salvador.

In communities of the impoverished throughout El Salvador, people had long deferred to traditional centers of power—the government and the Church—that were mainly concerned with maintaining the status quo. As long as poor, agricultural peasants in El Salvador went to their priest with every problem they had, they would never understand themselves as agents of their own destiny in any way. The goal of servant leadership in the ministry of Rutilio Grande, SJ, was to bring forth the gifts and talents of a community and to create less dependence on paternalistic figures like a mayor or parish priest. Rutilio knew there had to be a new Church before there could be a new society inspired by the Gospel. The key to a new Church was a new form of leadership that replaced clericalism with servant leadership. He was very aware that former models of Church leadership had kept people oppressed and dependent, and he openly expressed his concerns. It was this type of harmful leadership that he tried to change. Thus, the collegiality of Vatican II was not simply an idea for how bishops and the pope should interact; it became the model for a new type of community at the parish level. This type of leadership did not see empowering laypeople as a threat to the exercise of the priestly office. Everyone has gifts to bring to a community, and the presence of dedicated lay ministers allowed for more effective and focused priestly ministry.

Lessons for North America

When most North Americans think of Vatican II they think in terms of changes in the liturgy. This very visible and, for some, traumatic change of how the Church publically worships together is understandably what most remember. But other, very important dimensions of faith, Church, and leadership changed as well. The Catholic Church went from a two-tiered level of holiness (ordained were more holy than lay) to a "universal call to holiness" where everyone has a vocation and lives out that vocation in response to God's invitation. The Church went from seeing itself as "above" or at least "apart" from the world to being able to learn from the world as well as trans-

form that world in the direction of the kingdom of God. The leadership of the Church moved from a pope as "monarch" model to a pope who is first among equals and a servant leader of all. But written documents and wonderful ideas are not always lived out.

For the vast number of Catholics in North America, practicing the faith is largely about personal holiness with heaven as the goal. This is consistently taught in parishes and grade schools as well as high schools and confirmation classes. But the Church of Vatican II is not simply a Church of personal holiness. There is a social dimension to the faith—one that extends beyond individual issues of sexual or medical ethics. The purpose of the Church is to work for the kingdom of God, as *Lumen Gentium* stated at Vatican II. This critical document spelled out how the Church understood itself and its purpose. The role of laypeople is to work for that kingdom through their everyday lives—where they live, work, raise families, and serve. Much more is necessary to live out the Christian life than Mass attendance and sacramental consumption. I realize I am speaking in generalizations, but after receiving seventeen years of high school students into my first-year theology courses, many who come from Catholic schools, I believe the general trends of faith and practice indicated here are accurate. Rutilio Grande, SJ, and the Church of Latin America can serve as an example for us of the social dimension of the faith. This dimension, unfortunately, has been reduced to charitable giving by most parishes and schools—but more is possible.

When the Latin American bishops convened in 1968 at a conference in Medellín, Colombia, they adapted, appropriated, and applied the social teachings of Vatican II to the Church of Latin America in a way that did not happen in the United States until the US bishops wrote *Economic Justice for All* in 1986. The Latin American bishops wrote prophetically about justice, peace, and even their own call to poverty as a Church that should better serve the poor—those who made up the majority of their people. Priests like Rutilio (and there were many others throughout Latin America) took those teachings and applied them concretely to their own context marked by poverty, oppression, and increasing violence. To take the teachings of the bishops and actually apply those on the ground in parishes and dioceses put many priests and bishops in physical danger.

Latin America, even today, has some of the highest rates of inequality in the world. This inequality is not accidental. Most countries in this region emerged from the period of colonization ruled by

powerful leaders representing the interests of a small group of very wealthy people known as the oligarchy. For almost four hundred years, the Church had supported and had been supported by those same oligarchies throughout Latin America. When the Latin American bishops prophetically denounced this inequality in 1968, they reversed centuries of collusion with the wealthy and powerful and earned themselves many enemies. People do not easily give up or even share what they have, even when injustice is obvious. The result of this new Church, one that made an option to work with the poor, was epitomized by Rutilio Grande, a Jesuit faithful to the vision of his bishops and Pope Paul VI. But such a change came with a cost. When the bishops of Latin America were asked if they could "drink the cup that I drink" (Mark 10:27) they said "yes," and many paid for that "yes" with their lives.

Rutilio is an important reminder that following the Gospel and living it out socially, politically, and economically comes with a cost. There is a response anytime the rich and powerful feel their wealth or power is threatened. Jesus of Nazareth was not killed for telling everyone to love each other, even their enemies. He was killed for asserting that his fellow Jews misunderstood who God was, and then he lived and served others according to a God who included and humanized *everyone*. The scandal of Jesus was the scandal invoked when he reached out to those who were despised and announced God's love of them. By welcoming them into his community and advocating for those persecuted by their fellow human beings, he threatened the social order of his day. God is love and Jesus lived out that love perfectly, even when it cost him his life. He paid the price when he could have walked away. Love costs. For a Church that is wealthy and comfortable such as the Church of North America, Rutilio stands as a prophetic sign. If we are not effectively working to challenge the growing inequality in our society which dehumanizes so many people, we are failing fundamentally to live out what is a singularly Christian mission.

Robert Bellah, the noted sociologist, argued in the seminal work *Habits of the Heart* that certain forms of American individualism lack a language to connect private and public life. Perhaps the Catholic Church could offer a language to compete with the ever-increasing volume of libertarian voices in American public life. When Catholic politicians quote Ayn Rand, an ultraindividualistic atheist, this voice

is more necessary than ever. Rutilio Grande, SJ, fleshes out an example of that voice in the small country of El Salvador in the 1960s and 1970s. He tried to understand the problems of his context and respond to them from the heart of the Gospel. He did not try to suggest technical solutions, but he outlined parameters for how to judge a society in light of the Gospel. He connected the Gospel to people's lives—and not just on Sunday. He pronounced the social dimensions of the sacraments like the Eucharist. He brought God "out of the sky" for very poor and very traditional Catholics so that the Gospel grew little feet in their communities. I hope Rutilio Grande, SJ, inspires the Catholic Church of North America the way he did his own archbishop, Oscar Romero. With Romero, I say to the people of North America, "Let us embrace this inheritance."

CHAPTER ONE

To Evangelize We Must See: Rutilio Grande, SJ, and Social Analysis

Historical Context

In the following article, titled *Violence and the Social Situation*, Rutilio Grande, SJ, reminds those in El Salvador that the Church had a tradition of social doctrine and that because of this tradition, it was legitimate for the Church to weigh in on concerns that were "worldly." The article, published in an academic journal called *Estudios Centroamericano* (Central American Studies) and based at the Jesuit University of Central America (UCA), attempts to identify the causes of violence in El Salvador. From Rutilio's analysis, it is evident that unequal land distribution is partly to blame for serious social problems that included both "institutional" and "armed" violence. "Institutional" violence was government-sponsored violence aimed at preserving the status quo, while "armed" violence was the population arming itself and using violence in response.

El Salvador began to wrestle with the historical legacy of extreme unequal land distribution within the country in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A mere 2 percent of the population owned 60 percent of the most fertile land in the country, and there was a deep division in the structure of land ownership.[1] On one level, large estates used modern technology to produce highly efficient crop yields for export. On another level, small subsistence farmers used rudimentary farming methods on less fertile soil to scrape out a living. The plight of

[1] Susan Ram, "El Salvador: Perspectives on a Revolutionary Civil War," *Social Scientist* 11, no. 8 (August 1983): 7–8, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3517048.

the rural agricultural worker became increasingly vulnerable and unstable as the decades progressed, with many resorting to selling their less fertile lands and renting from others. These workers and their families constituted somewhere between 50 to 60 percent of the Salvadoran population in the late 1960s. The first effort at land reform had been defeated in the National Congress in March of that year. As a result of this imbalance, violence emerged within and throughout the country.

Following Vatican II and the Catholic Church's new commitment to justice, many priests who ministered in these rural agricultural communities began to study the causes of the social reality where they lived. No longer was it possible simply to give "charity," a response that met the immediate needs of those who were poor. Charity addressed only the *symptoms* of a deeper problem. Getting at the *causes* of this deeper problem became the work of justice.

[*Reader's note: The following article appeared in an academic journal based at the University of Central America and is somewhat complex in its argument. It presupposes knowledge of terms associated with church ministry and social analysis. Please see the glossary for helpful definitions.*]

Violence and the Social Situation[2]

Rutilio Grande, SJ

Social Reality Is Also within the Competence of the Church

This title calls attention to what is known as the social doctrine of the Church. It appears within this title with great clarity but is unknown by those priests who stay in the sacristy, who speak of love and charity, who teach doctrine to children, who give vouchers for the parish movie, and who distribute alms to the needy among their faithful.

Some say that a priest should be a good man who does not go where he is not called. And they are right; this is how a priest ought to be, among other things.

[2] Rutilio Grande, "Violencia y la Situación Social," *Estudios Centroamericanos* 262 (1970): 369–75. Throughout this article, emphasis is from Grande's original work.

But it happens that they do get called about very serious things and they become involved in things not mentioned above, and because of this, there are those who criticize and accuse these priests of meddling, of being revolutionaries, and so on.

It is often said that the priest should not get involved in economic or social matters. If he does, he will be called a communist. They give the following reasons: if you are an engineer you shouldn't get involved with morality; in the same way a priest should not involve himself in economic or social matters. But the comparison is not valid, for while technical things pertain to the engineer and the economist, etc., social and economic realities are necessary to be human; they pertain to all people and are thus a part of morality.

What do the Supreme Pontiffs say about this?

Since Leo XIII we have seen an insistence that questions of economics cannot be separated from questions of morality, and morality is completely within the purview of the Church.

The pope said in 1901: "Some say, and this error is fairly widespread, that the social question is a purely economic one, conversely, we are certain that the social question is principally moral and religious. For this reason, it should be settled in accordance with the laws of morality and religion."[3]

Pius X stated, "The social question and the controversies surrounding it are derived from the nature and duration of labor, the level of wages, and workers' strikes, and these are not only of an economic nature. For this reason, they cannot be resolved outside the authority of the Church."[4]

We wish to indicate that the Church, long ago, emphasized the fact that the problems in question are not "purely economic," but rather affect the moral life and therefore fall within its own competence.

Pius XI, without invalidating the distinction between economic and moral science and without negating the specification of the object of the economy, insisted that the object of morality includes the object of the economy. "It is an error to affirm that the economic order and the moral order are so distant from each other that the former has

[3] Leo XIII, *Graves de Communi* (On Christian Democracy), May 18, 1901, BAC-DS, p. 428, no. 10.

[4] Pius X, *Singulari Quadam* (On Labor Organizations), Sept. 24, 1912, BAC-DS, p. 513, no. 3.

nothing to do with the latter."[5] Therefore, the same object is treated by two complementary points of view.

Economic crises, unemployment, inflation and deflation, supply and demand, with consequences for the level of wages, these forces are all profoundly related economically, socially, and morally. It is not possible to resolve these problems without reference to the human person, and this falls squarely in the realm of morality. Economic weights and measures and their effects will never be exclusively economic, they will always be in relation to persons and therefore with morality. Lebret says in his work *The Concrete Dynamic of Development*: "We do not accept the separation of the economic from the human. What counts for us is the person."[6]

And **Paul VI** says: "Economics and technology have no meaning except in relation to the human person, whom they should serve."[7] "Development cannot be reduced simply to economic growth. To be authentic it should be integral, that is, it must benefit all people and the whole person."[8]

For these reasons, the Church should also speak about social reality, not in a merely technical sense, but with regard to its implications for the human and moral dimensions of life.

And so we see the Church articulating this through Leo XIII, Pius X, Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI, and Vatican II. But for some, the priest that preaches these teachings is bad, for he has left the sacristy and no longer teaches children to be obedient to their parents and not hit their little brothers and sisters.

The Social Reality of Latin America

The social reality of Latin America lends itself to multiple reflections, attitudes, and reactions. We would like to reflect on this reality with objectivity, with a rational attitude and to react not only in favor of structural change but also in terms of the conversion of people

[5] Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* (On Reconstruction of the Social Order), May 15, 1931, BAC-DS, p. 712, no. 42.

[6] Louis Joseph Lebret, *Dinámica Concreta del Desarrollo*, Segunda edición ampliada (Barcelona: Herder, 1969), 559 pages (no page reference given by Grande).

[7] Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio* (On the Development of Peoples), March 26, 1967, par. 34.

[8] Ibid., par. 14.

who will implement these changes with disinterest and solid technical knowledge. We need people convinced of the necessity of modifying the existing structures and who will do so despite the greatest enemy—human selfishness. To change the structures alone would promote only a harmful revolution. People with preparation and disinterest have the capacity to change the necessary structures, but this must be a struggle for justice and development as well.

The situation of Latin America is amazingly complex. Let us make some assumptions based on data.[9] The rate of growth is approximately 2.9 percent, making the population increase from about 200 million people in 1960 to about 690 million people in the year 2000. In forty years the population will increase more than threefold. This continent is deprived of almost all possibilities for personal initiative and responsibility and includes living and working conditions unworthy of human beings.

These realities do not have simple solutions. They show us the goal to be achieved. The way forward is great skill, new systems, and people prepared and convinced to change what is necessary to bring about justice and love.

The Social Reality of El Salvador

The Population of El Salvador was 3,266,492 inhabitants in 1968 with a density of 163.3 inhabitants per square kilometer. The rate of population growth is 3.4 percent. According to the 1961 census, 48.7 percent of the population was younger than sixteen years old. Situating the age of sixteen as the threshold of productive age, for every person working we have another person who is not. The reality is that one person works for every two who doesn't, so in 1961 only 32.1 percent of the population was actively working.

The youngest of our population suffer from problems related to food, housing, clothing, overall health, and education, etc. The literate population ten years and older, according to the 1961 census, equaled 50.8 percent of the population. This data is sufficient to understand the titanic force that is required in education to absorb the existing illiterate population, which continues to grow every year.

[9] Rutilio draws most of his information from the Salvadoran national census of 1960.

Per capita income is theoretically 703 colones (281 US dollars) a year, equally distributed among all. But practically speaking, 8 percent of the population receives half the income; while the other half, if distributed equally among the rest of the population, received 383 colones (153 dollars) annually. With this income, the maximum amount that a person can earn monthly is 32 colones (13 dollars). We know well that this distribution is largely theoretical since in practice there are still many inequalities, largely in the rural population, which represents 61.3 percent of inhabitants.

The urban housing deficit was calculated in 1969 at 178,400, while the rural housing deficit was at 275,000 units. If we assume an average of five people for each unit of housing, we have 1,377,000 people in the country living in homes that do not deserve that name.

The problem of large and small estates is a fact, according to data from the second agricultural census of 1961. Farms of one hundred hectares (250 acres) take up about 47.71 percent of the land, roughly 754,498 hectares (1,886,245 acres) of all the cultivatable land which is 1,581,428 hectares (3,953,570 acres). 81.19 percent of the farms, which constitute land less than 5 hectares (12.5 acres), do not represent more than 15.64 percent of agricultural land, roughly 247,376 hectares (618,440 acres). Properties of a thousand and more hectares are .05 percent of all holdings and cover 15.47 percent of all the land, 248,918 hectares (622,295 acres). The holdings of the .05 percent cover more land than the holdings of the 85.19 percent of the population. We should also remember that sometimes many large estates are owned by the same person.

According to Gonzalez Luna Herrero, ME, in "Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry Zoning," even with the small surface area of 1,581,428 hectares (3,953,570 acres), according to the 1961 census, it should not be forgotten that in El Salvador 487,000 hectares (1,217,500 acres) are unused.

The need for comprehensive agrarian reform has become urgently clear, especially in light of all this data and more like it related to seasonal and hidden unemployment in the countryside. This reform should include the use of uncultivated land, sanitation, and better cultivation of existing holdings and the selection of crops. It should further include the overcoming of monoculture, the industrialization of agricultural products, the increase of national and international markets, the assistance of communication, money and credit

for the agricultural industry, and above all, the education of the rural agricultural workers and their professional formation. Further, they ought to study the best method for land distribution, one of the many elements of a comprehensive land reform and something that is also very urgent. This distribution ought to be well studied from both economic and social points of view.

To sum up, the problem of El Salvador is highly complex. An elevated rate of population growth aggravates problems in education, housing, and overall health. Additionally, low per capita income has great influence on El Salvador. The majority of the rural population is insufficiently paid for work and there is high seasonal unemployment and underemployment. The population has a low ability for questioning their reality, there is a necessity to improve infrastructure and to create new jobs through strong investment.

We understand that this overview is incomplete. We have looked at only part of reality. We recognize also the large and very effective forces of both private initiative and public entities. These can increase housing, make accessible education, increase and improve infrastructure, augment business and production, and create new jobs and wealth. All of this is part of the highly commendable tenacity of El Salvador to overcome and improve the situation of its citizens. And this, in our judgment, is the road to solving our grave social problems.

Despite many efforts, huge social inequalities exist and it is urgent to solve these inequalities according to the obligations of justice. Without any desire to play on emotions or stir up the people, it has to be said that it is simply and counterproductively inefficient to distribute wealth in such a way. It is clearly evident that we need a more equitable distribution of income. Let's see a few texts that relate to these matters from the Church.

It is a grave error to promote the idea that the right to private property is unlimited. It limits the common good. On September 1, 1944, Pius XII said to us that "the Church has frowned upon, as contrary to natural justice, the assumption that private property is an unlimited right without any subordination to the common good."

In *Populorum Progressio* (On the Development of Peoples), while speaking of the right of all people to the use of goods and how nothing should hinder this, Paul VI said, "Private property does not constitute for anyone an absolute and unconditioned right. No one is

justified in keeping for their exclusive use what they do not need when others lack necessities."[10]

In *Gaudium et Spes*, Vatican II says: "By its nature private property has a social dimension which is based on the law of the common destination of earthly goods" (GS 71).

Because of such expressions, it is thought that we in the Church are against strong capital—but we are not. What matters is how such strong capital is used and why. Strong capital is necessary for development. But this same capital ought to have a social function; it ought to serve its own country in order to create work and to increase national income, ensuring that those who are working increase their income. Capital aims to promote development so that necessary goods reach as many people as possible.

We are not those who offer practical solutions to these problems. We are not development, economic, or financial experts. We are those who want only to put their efforts in service to their country and all Salvadorans while searching for solutions to so many grave social problems.

Bloody Violence and Institutionalized Violence

We are living in Latin America amid continuing acts of savage violence. It goes without saying that we reject this violence. We cannot be in agreement with these systems so contrary to freedom and to the rights of the human person. We repeat what Pope Paul VI stated, "Violence is neither Christian nor evangelical."

When analyzing the complex fact of armed violence, we encounter a factor that we ought to study more closely: social injustice.

It is obvious that actual violence is the following, as stated by the Latin American bishops at their meeting in Medellín, Colombia, in August 1968:

> A situation of injustice can be called institutionalized violence when, because of a structural deficiency in the quantity of industry and agriculture, of national and international economy, cultural and political life, "entire populations lack necessities, live in such dependence that hinders all initiative and responsibility,

[10] Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, par. 23.

> as well as every possibility for cultural promotion and participation in social and political life," thus violating fundamental human rights. This situation demands all-embracing, courageous, urgent, and profoundly renovating transformations. We should not be surprised, therefore, that the "temptation to violence" is rising in Latin America.[11]

We have a problem with violence on two levels: Institutional violence and armed violence. The two are unjust, the two are prejudicial to the rights of human beings, the two are contrary to peace, since "peace is, before all, a work of justice," according to the Second Vatican Council in *Gaudium et Spes* (GS 78).

In time, institutional violence by the state preceded the armed violence among the people and is one of the factors that produced the armed revolution.

Conscious of the complexity of this issue, of the danger of arousing the passions of people over issues of violence that are susceptible to multiple interpretations, we want to say that in El Salvador there is no place for any type of violence. I want to argue from some data that can illuminate a national reality of "excessive" disproportion in the distribution of goods. All "excess" carries a derogatory meaning and in our case is a sign of an unjust situation.

The Plan of Development for 1956–1959, Volume 1, page 46, states: "A recent study demonstrated that only 8% of all families have incomes of 400 colones (160 dollars) or more per month, while 60% of families earned less than 130 colones (52 dollars) monthly. Around 8% of the population receives approximately 50% of all income. 30% of the entire population of El Salvador, or approximately 750,000 people, earn less than 12 colones (4.8 dollars) a month in consumer items, and the other 58% earn less than 24 colones (9.6 dollars) a month."

We recognize the necessity of capital that can strengthen work and wealth and never advocate a "joyful sharing of assets" [as communism does]. We would like it if in El Salvador there was no armed or institutional violence. But we also recognize that according to the data given, there exists an "excessive" disproportion in the distribution

[11] Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM), *Final Document on Peace*, Medellín, 1968, no. 16.

of goods that could give occasion and explain, without defending, the armed violence as it does in other countries.

And what matters most is not to destroy but to build. We are conscious of the complexity of the problems. We want to denounce this "excess," not to stir up people but to ask those who influence national political and economic reality to make rapid and effective efforts to improve the unjust situation of our fellow citizens.

***** End of Article *****

Commentary

This article was important for a number of reasons. Previously the Church had been concerned mainly with sacraments and individual moral decision making. In this article, Rutilio tried to outline clearly the new role of the Church in the world by advocating for concrete responses to social, economic, and political problems. Second, this was an early example of how some in the Church in Central America used social analysis, albeit at a basic level, to better understand the situation to which they were ministering. Finally, in light of this article, a deficiency in the intellectual formation of diocesan priests in North America becomes apparent. The lack of sociology in their formation makes it difficult, if not impossible, to attempt social analysis and thus improve their pastoral ministry in our own context. This seems to be an aspect of priestly ministry that could be easily strengthened.

The Church and the World

Prior to Vatican II and throughout the colonial period in Latin America (1492–1820), the Catholic Church and whatever government controlled a particular region agreed to operate almost exclusively in their own predesignated spheres.[12] This understanding of church-state relations during the time of conquest recognized that the Church

[12] For a more complete argument on this see Thomas Kelly, *When the Gospel Grows Feet: Rutilio Grande, SJ, and the Church of El Salvador* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013). Chapters 1 and 2 develop this history of dualism in the colonial Church.

had absolute authority over all things "spiritual" while the state had absolute authority over all things "material" including social, economic, and political policy. Because the Church was dependent on the state for most, if not all, of its privileges in the colonial period (for example, the Church was the second largest landholder in Latin America), it generally accepted this division of labor and influence.

Fr. Bartolomeo de Las Casas, a famous advocate for native peoples in the early conquest period, once recounted a story where some priests waited outside of a gold mine in order to baptize the slaves, many of whom would die that day. The concern of the priests was for the salvation of the slaves' "souls," not the suffering of their "bodies" undergoing death or the eradication of the system that put them into slavery in the first place. This basic division of responsibility between the "spiritual" and "material" is also vividly portrayed in the mines of Bolivia, where the overwhelming majority of people worshipped in Catholic churches above ground, but in the mines controlled by colonial powers below, a cult to "the devil" was employed to control workers and their production through fear.[13]

With the rise of the philosophy of Karl Marx in the nineteenth century and the growing power of labor movements in Europe, the Church finally weighed in on what was formerly considered outside of its purview—the economy, the role of the state, private property, labor rights, just wages, etc. Pope Leo XIII would begin this "social doctrine of the Church" with his encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum*, which translates as "of new things." Of course none of these things were "new." What was "new" was the Church weighing in on them and effectively ending the church-state relationship as it had been understood and lived out. This was not without some self-interest. Of great concern in *Rerum Novarum* was the role of the state and private property. This was particularly important to the Church because the Papal States had been seized and incorporated into the state of Italy in 1870. Church land had diminished to what today is known as Vatican City. Nevertheless, the Church of El Salvador was fairly self-focused until after Vatican II, when it began to analyze the reality within which it existed. Of course, not everyone accepted this new focus on the world.

[13] For an excellent visual documentary on this see *The Devil's Miner*, directed by Kief Davidson and Richard Ladkani (First Run/Icarus Films, 2005).

Note the tension in the article concerning different models of priestly ministry. There were those who "stay in the sacristy" and "speak of love and charity." The implication was that some priests were hiding from the world and engaging only the symptoms of much deeper problems. It was good to give food to the hungry, but the causes of hunger also needed to be addressed. Giving "charity" failed to address the underlying causes of poverty and marginalization and consequently maintained the status quo. At the same time there were those who involved themselves in "economic or social matters" who were called "communists." In addition to the stereotype of "communist," the more dangerous word "revolutionary" was noted. Naming someone a revolutionary in El Salvador made him or her a target of government forces and right-wing death squads. This tension reflected divisions among the priests and bishops of El Salvador at this time. The acceptance and application of Vatican II in the Salvadoran context was anything but easy. As early as 1970, there was tension between the social doctrine of the Church and those who resisted change to the social, economic, or political realities of El Salvador.

Rutilio tried to educate the public, and perhaps some of his fellow priests, on the history of Catholic social thought beginning with Leo XIII and ending with Paul VI. He began by establishing that economics cannot be separated from morality because economics pertains to all people, and this human connection makes it subject to morality. Thus, the first social encyclical of the Church on capital and labor, *Rerum Novarum*, treated issues such as labor conditions, unions, just wages, private property, and obligations of the rich. Pius X continued this emphasis on particular problems and issues, including the nature and duration of labor, the level of wages, and the right of workers to strike. Pius XI built upon this line of thought so that, according to Rutilio, one cannot separate economic "weights and measures" from people or morality. Finally, Paul VI spoke of "integral development," where he echoed the official Church teaching of Vatican II in which we see the *entire* person as an integrated whole with legitimate needs pertaining to body and soul, whether he or she is poor or rich (GS 14). Contrary to "spiritualists," human needs and the material world are validated in their economic, social, political, and cultural forms. Contrary to Marxism, the soul and spiritual growth are validated as essential to human development. Understood

as an integrated whole, the human person will grow and develop by having both physical and spiritual needs met. A "more fully human" person grows in all dimensions; a "less fully human person" lacks some or all of them. Christians are called to work for the full humanity of everyone and the whole person.

The approach by Paul VI is quite different from the explanation given by the Church for the reality of poverty prior to Vatican II. For centuries, poverty was understood to be the will of God. A new perspective became possible with the ability to understand how and why social forces form social reality. Far from being "God's will," poverty and suffering emerged from social, political, and economic realities that benefitted some and hurt others. The ability to analyze these social realities and understand why people suffered from poverty was very important for the ministry of the Church—especially if the purpose of the Church was to serve and build the kingdom of God. One characteristic of the kingdom of God is a world in which justice prevails and every effort to alleviate poverty and suffering for the common good is taken up by all.

Prior to Vatican II, the kingdom of God was thought to be either heaven or the Church itself. The Vatican II constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, made it very clear that the kingdom of God is both now and not yet. The Church works for a world consistent with God's will as revealed in Scripture and tradition, but only God finally completes this work. "Its [the Church's] destiny is the *kingdom of God* which has been begun by God Himself on earth and which is to be further extended until it is brought to perfection by him at the end of time when Christ our life shall appear and 'creation itself also will be delivered from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the sons and daughters of God'" (LG 9, emphasis mine). In order to serve the kingdom of God, we need to understand the causes of the anti-kingdom—i.e., any social, political, or economic reality that dehumanizes people. For this reason, the social teaching of the Church was, and continues to be, essential to its mission in the world.

Social Sciences and Ministry

Trying to understand the context within which one ministers is a difficult and complex undertaking. Prior to Vatican II, John XXIII continued an approach used by the Church since the early twentieth

century in the following passage from his encyclical letter *Mater et Magistra* (On Christianity and Social Progress) in 1961.

> There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgment on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: look, judge, act.[14]

It is to this first moment of the process of understanding, the "look" or "see" moment, that much of the Church of Latin America turned toward following Vatican II. This was made easier with encouragement from another Vatican II document, *Gaudium et Spes* (the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World). "In pastoral care sufficient use should also be made, not only of theological principles, but also of the findings of secular sciences, especially psychology and sociology: in this way the faithful will be brought to a purer and more mature living of the faith" (GS 62).

When Rutilio occupied a leadership position in the major seminary in El Salvador in the 1960s, he originated "immersion trips" to poor rural farming communities for seminarians. His insight was that contact with the poor, as part of priestly formation, was essential for ministers to be effective when they completed their studies. Most of these "immersions" were spent listening to the people and their experience of reality. The purpose was explained this way: "the first contact with the people was to be characterized by a human encounter; to try to enter into their reality in order to leave with a common reality."[15] While this contact was essential to seminarian formation, it was not enough. Social analysis, a deeper exploration of the "see" moment of ministry, was the next step; it was critical for understanding the causes of violence within El Salvador.

Rutilio began his social analysis of El Salvador by admitting that Latin America "lends itself to multiple reflections," none of which were exhaustive in and of itself. In trying to get at the root causes of

[14] John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra* (On Christianity and Social Progress), par. 236.

[15] Ernesto Cardenal, *Historia de una Esperanza: Vida de Rutilio Grande* (El Salvador: UCA Editores, 2002), 105.

violence in the country, he analyzed the population and its level of inequality as a possible cause for violence. He clearly understood, contrary to Marxism, that changing structures alone would not change the reality of El Salvador. "To change structures, alone, would only promote a harmful revolution." He was working from an understanding of integral development put forth by Paul VI in his encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (On the Development of Peoples).[16]

Rutilio's analysis began with census data that included population growth, demographics, per capita income, housing, land distribution, and the need for agrarian reform. Because the suffering and poverty rate of the rural, agricultural farming population were so much higher than the rest of the country, Rutilio would designate agrarian reform as particularly important. For justification of the redistribution of land and wealth, Rutilio would again look to Church teaching. Citing Popes Pius XII and Paul VI as well as Vatican II, he would argue that "capital ought to have a social function." This is important. Rutilio never argued for the abolition of capital or for communism as the answer. Rather, he argued for a benevolent capitalism—one put in service to human beings—that would create work and increase income for the poor. In the end, he made it clear that the Church should indicate problems and possible causes while acknowledging that experts should suggest practical solutions to those problems. But indicating the problem and its possible causes was part of the solution.

In a very delicate manner, Rutilio moved from an analysis of inequality in El Salvador, what he identified as "a national reality of 'excessive' disproportion in the distribution of goods," to the position that both "institutionalized violence" and "armed violence" emerged from this inequality. Such inequality required government violence to maintain the status quo, and *in response to this*, "armed violence" by the general population resulted. He argued that this analysis of inequality "explains" the violent situation without defending the resulting "armed violence," as both forms of violence (institutionalized and armed) violated Christian principles. Finally, Rutilio appealed to his fellow citizens by denouncing the unjust inequality in his context and by urging a "just" nonviolent resolution to the problem.

[16] Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, par. 21.

Lessons for North America

Following a talk I once gave at a parish in 2009, the pastor approached me to vent about a particular frustration. He shared with me an experience when he delivered school supplies to a family that was "struggling." When he arrived at the home to donate those supplies, he walked past a boat and a large RV in the driveway on his way to the front door. Once inside, he fumed about the massive flat-screen TV on the wall. "Why should I give people school supplies for their children when they blow their money on boats, RVs and flat-screen TVs?" he said. "Father," I answered, "we live in an intensely consumerist society; their money is going to what they have been told should be their priorities." He looked at me with confusion. After a lengthy discussion about the drive to consume in our society, he looked distinctly uncomfortable. What became clear to me was an inability to understand the social reality to which he was ministering. He realized that in order to respond to this consumerism in his context, he would need to be "prophetic" in his preaching. This meant he needed to challenge the consumerism and materialism that seems built into American culture. When he realized that only by challenging the cultural status quo could he address the root of his frustration, the conversation quickly ended.

The US Catholic Conference of Bishops publishes a guide titled the *Program for Priestly Formation*.[17] If one searches this document for the word "sociology," the result is a failed search. In the ninety-nine paragraphs dedicated to "Intellectual Formation," the overwhelming emphasis is on proper and correct theology and philosophy. The stated intent of this section is "to prepare a candidate who is widely knowledgeable about the human condition, deeply engaged in a process of understanding divine revelation, and adequately skilled in communicating this knowledge to as many people as possible."[18] The social sciences are mentioned as good preparation for a liberal arts education but are seen as a precursor to theological studies and

[17] The document "Program of Priestly Formation" (5th ed.) was developed by the Committee on Priestly Formation of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). It was approved by the full body of bishops at its June 2005 general meeting, received the subsequent *approbatio* of the Holy See, and has been authorized for publication. It can be accessed at http://www.usccb.org/upload/program-priestly-formation-fifth-edition.pdf.

[18] USCCB, "Program of Priestly Formation," no. 138.

not as having value in and of themselves. The recommended major in seminaries is philosophy. "Philosophy has historically been considered the most appropriate area of concentration for college seminarians."[19] It becomes clear after reading through the suggested curriculum that after all the philosophy, theology, homiletics, canon law, and catechetical studies, not much room is left for anything else. A typical MDiv program at a major seminary has the following requirements, give or take some minor differences.

Master of Divinity Requirements[20]

A. Biblical Studies and Homiletics	(8 classes)
B. Systematic Theology	(8 classes)
C. Church History	(4 classes)
D. Liturgy and Music	(3 classes)
E. Moral Theology	(4 classes)
F. Spiritual Theology	(1 class)
G. Pastoral Theology/Canon Law	(8 classes)

The emphasis, as one can see, is on the body of knowledge typically associated with "sacred studies." What is lacking is the ability to analyze and understand complex social problems. This is not a minor issue if the Church has a mission to the world, but it gets more interesting. In a section following "Intellectual Formation" is a section titled "Pastoral Formation."[21] According to this section, pastoral formation must include "a number of essential elements" such as proclamation of the Word, the sacramental dimension, the missionary dimension, the community dimension, skills for effective public ministry, personal synthesis for practical use, an initiation into practical pastoral experiences, cultural sensitivity, religious pluralism, and (finally) the poor among others.[22] In the final line of the paragraph describing the "poor," the document says, "They [seminarians] also

[19] Ibid., no. 151.

[20] A number of program curricula were analyzed, including Mundelein Seminary of the Chicago Archdiocese and Mt. St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

[21] USCCB, "Program of Priestly Formation," no. 236.

[22] Ibid., no. 239.

need to become aware of the social contexts and structures that can breed injustice as well as ways of promoting more just contexts and structures."[23]

Given the emphasis on "sacred" studies above, is it really any wonder that my local pastor did not understand the consumerism within which his parish was swimming? Without giving seminarians the tools for social analysis, how can priests proclaim the Word of God in light of unjust immigration policies, the use of torture to preserve "national security," increasing income inequality, and the health-care needs of the poor and uninsured? Could abortion rates, for example, be related to income, health care, employment opportunities, pay inequality for women, and child-care availability?

The overwhelming emphasis in North American parish life and spirituality rests on both an individual's relationship with God and a commitment to charity as the best way to engage the world. Seminarians cannot use social analysis in their pastoral ministry until it becomes a required part of their intellectual formation. One could argue that religious orders have been more conscious of this and, for this reason, tend to have more prophetic voices.

Questions for Discussion

(1) Does your faith community embrace a "charity" or "justice" form of social engagement? How?

(2) What has been your exposure to the social teaching of the Church in your local parish or Catholic school?

(3) How might engaging in social analysis as a faith community change our approach to social problems?

(4) Rutilio Grande, SJ, argued that "excessive" inequality can lead to violence. Do you see examples of that in your own context?

[23] Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO

To Evangelize We Must Judge: Rutilio Grande, SJ, Speaks to Power

Historical Context

The following homily was given in August 1970 by Rutilio Grande, SJ, in the Cathedral of San Salvador, El Salvador. The president, vice president, and top military generals of the country were in attendance. Archbishop Chavez y Gonzalez of San Salvador presided. This homily reveals Rutilio's versatility and range in both his ability to address very different audiences, as well as his capacity to make abstract doctrine concrete and understandable.

The context for this homily was similar to the context of the previous article—a time of great upheaval in El Salvador, both in the political governance of the country as well as the inner dynamics of the Catholic Church. A short war with Honduras (1969) that resulted from tensions related to immigration and economic inequality had just concluded, and the first effort at land reform had been defeated in the National Congress in March of that year. A Salvadoran priest named P. Chencho Alas was found drugged and beaten after testifying before the Congress about the Church's position on land reform. Within the Catholic Church itself, there were real differences, even divisions, over the social role the Church should take.

In 1970, the bishops of Latin America met in Antigua, Guatemala, to accelerate the reforms of Vatican II and encourage the implementation of the Medellín conference. Following this meeting was the First National Pastoral Week in El Salvador where priests, bishops, and laypeople debated the implementation of Medellín in the life of the

Salvadoran Church.[1] Rutilio was scandalized by the conclusions of this pastoral week, largely due to the resistance from some in the hierarchy evident in their "rewriting" of the conclusions of that week before they were sent to Rome.[2] This homily was his response to the internal crisis the country and the Church were experiencing.

Homily on the Solemnity of the Transfiguration of the Lord Cathedral of San Salvador, August 6, 1970[3]

Rutilio Grande, SJ

Why Are We Here?

This question, asked with humility and no pretension, comes to us at this time during this gathering of the people of God meeting here in the metropolitan cathedral of the capital city of the Republic of El Salvador. It extends to all those united with us in spirit through the radio, in the most humble and secluded parts of the country.

All questions make us explain how we feel. Each question leads us to an awareness of what we have interiorized through what we have been involved in through our free will or through the circumstances of our environment.

Why are we here? This is the question whose answer we seek, with humility and sincerity. Many answers are offered for our consideration. These possible answers, even analyzed briefly, can lead us to an interior purification that we all desire, especially me.

"I am here out of curiosity." This is a possible answer and one I hope is not shared by any of those present here. It is not worth stopping to analyze this response. If we are moved to be here from mere

[1] Salvador Carranza, Miguel Cavada Diez, Jon Sobrino, *XXV Aniversario de Rutilio Grande. Sus Homilías* (San Salvador: Centro Monseñor Romero, UCA, 2007), 37–38. Unless otherwise indicated, bolded words or headings are from the original.

[2] Dean Brackley, interview in *Jesuit Journeys: The Jesuits of El Salvador*, produced by Don Doll, Magis Productions, 2004.

[3] Carranza, Cavada Diez, Sobrino, *XXV Aniversario de Rutilio Grande. Sus Homilías*, 39–51. I am grateful to Carlos Alvarez for editing parts of this translation.

curiosity about such important issues, we lack something essential in the layers of our identity as citizens and Christians!

"I am here by mere convention." This is another possible answer I hope does not include anyone here. It is parallel to the first answer, or worse, it is much more insulting than the first answer.

"I am here because I do not want to miss Mass today nor the descent of the Divine Savior, this fifth of August in the afternoon. I do not want to miss this or the Holy Week procession. In terms of other people, I do not care. I appear from time to time in church, but I have no clear ideas of what, in reality, Christianity and the Gospel of Jesus have to do with my own life or with respect to my country or the world. I don't care about any of that."

Dear brothers and sisters, already there is some, or a lot, of caricature in this hypothetical response; but I do not deny there are bits of truth in this formulation. It is a response that a superficial Christian would give—shallow and without consequences for the life of the individual or the society within which one lives. Better said, this is not Christianity, it is a caricature of Christianity, its disfiguration. These positions do not lead us anywhere but disgrace the Church and the Gospel, which, like Jesus said, is the "sacred fire,"[4] a burning flame and existence embodied in life. In no way would I want this answer to be the reason why anyone is here.

Let us analyze the final answer, which I deeply hope includes everyone here as well as those united with us in spirit throughout the whole land of our beloved country.

"I am here out of personal faith which is sincere, conscious, and deepened in the God-man Christ, savior of humanity. I have been baptized in his name and I have a full awareness that he is my 'way, truth, and life,'"[5] for my own transfiguration as an individual, for the transfiguration of my country, and for the transfiguration of the entire world. I am aware and I am proud to belong to the Catholic Church through my baptism, because I know what this means for myself and for the building of a better world. And for this I am here today: to reaffirm my personal faith and to express it communally

[4] Luke 12:49. Unless otherwise indicated, English translations of Scripture passages quoted by Grande are from the NRSV.

[5] John 14:6.

through a sense of Church, in this solemn meeting of all those baptized on the occasion of the naming feast of our Republic."

Blessed are we who have on our lips, and in a special way in our hearts, this response of an authentic Christian! And still more blessed, if we not only form this with our lips but also that we live its fullness until its final consequences! We are as Christians and followers of Christ, a light for the world, the salt of the earth, and yeast for the transformation of humanity, which the Church advances through "intimate and real solidarity with all of humanity and throughout history."[6]

Jesus asked a question in his time similar to the one we have asked, trying to lead the multitude who listened to him into a greater interior awareness with respect to John the Baptist and his message. "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at?" asked Jesus to the multitude with a strong voice. "A reed shaken by the wind? Someone dressed in soft robes?"[7]

Neither John the Baptist nor a Christian is, in the mind of Jesus, a fragile reed shaken by the wind or a spoiled man. To be a Christian is to have a mental and ideological toughness that responds faithfully to all the tenets of the Gospel and a life commensurate with the demands of these tenets even to their ultimate consequences!

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It is always an event for Christians to come together **to share the bread of the Word of God and the Bread of the Eucharist**.[8] At the end of the day, God is light, as St. John says to us in his first letter, for there is no darkness in him. This light of God is communicated to us through his Word, always ancient and always new, that comes to fall like a seed in our intelligence, which comes to fruition in our hearts through the benefits of Christian existence.

[6] Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World), par. 1. All translations of excerpts from the documents of the Second Vatican Council quoted by Rutilio Grande, SJ, are by the editor/translator. The Spanish states, "La Iglesia por ello se siente íntima y realmente solidaria del género humano y de su historia." The English translation does not translate the term "real solidarity," nor does it have the same sense as the Spanish.

[7] Matt 11:7.

[8] These words are in bold in the original Spanish.

We hear this Word of God in the first part of Mass; it is what enhances our lives, and it is that which falls in the midst of the events of our lives: sometimes happy, other times sad.

This Word of God is one response to the fundamental values of all people "which . . . was coming into the world"[9] and which comes out to meet the life and death of people, of their happiness or unhappiness, of their freedom or slavery, of their work, of their vocation to love, of the truth, and of the good, of sin, of integral development.

This Word of God is newly incarnated in each Eucharist, in the sacramental body of Christ and in the ecclesial body of Christ, formed through all of those gathered in his name. We are, then, eating the Word of God in these moments, trying to assimilate it with our intelligence and with our heart in order to eat and chew the Word made Bread of Life in the host.

This is what gives meaning, energy, and dynamism to our Christian existence, situating us in the middle of life's events, with the compass of the Word of God in our intelligence and in our heart.

This is what makes us capable of a clearly Christian "revolution," purified of all abusive, insulting, and exclusive meanings. Christian revolution is based on the essence of the Gospel, whose marrow is LOVE. It excludes no person who has come into this world—either according to skin color, social position, level of intelligence, or for sins, which seek remedy.

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If every celebration of the Eucharist is an event for all Christians since the time of the Lord Jesus, if the Word of God is Light that comes to encounter us in order to illuminate the works of our life, we seek at the very core of this celebration, in that which we encounter, **an adequate answer for the requirements of our faith, as children of our country and of the Church.**

Today, in a particular way, the celebration of the Eucharist is clothed in a very special solemnity. All of us here believe in God, we are meeting in his name, in the metropolitan cathedral, in these heartfelt moments of the country at the center of the convergence of all the

[9] John 1:9.

children of this holy land. Our dear Archbishop Luis Chavez y Gonzalez presides at this solemn meeting as bishop and pastor of this local church of our archdiocese. He is the official witness of the resurrected Christ in the medium of this local church, through apostolic succession, and in communion with the pope, successor of Peter. The bishops of the other dioceses of our country accompany our bishop and pastor. Together with our bishop are also a crown of priests, his presbyters and collaborators in the sacred ministry.

Here also, presiding for all the people of God, are the highest authorities of the nation: Your excellencies, the presidents of the three powers of our Republic.

And together with their civil and religious authorities are all the members of the Church who are also citizens of the country.

We are all here meeting together at the altar of GOD whose name is stamped first in the trilogy on our flag. We are here together at the altar of God, fraternally united, huddled around Someone, who precisely on the altar and in the Eucharist is our supreme mediator before God. He is the same Word of God made flesh and our highest liberator, Jesus Christ, Savior of the world.

Jesus Christ is our mediator before God. Precisely to be a bridge between us and God, he took our flesh. He was the fullness of humanity, like another link in the chain of humanity. He profoundly shared our miseries and the consequences of sin: fatigue, anxiety, sickness. He wanted to be identified so much with humanity: Jesus wanted to be born in a cave without shelter, and he wanted to be known as "the son of the carpenter" of Nazareth. He had no place to rest his head, while foxes—he himself said—have their dens and birds of the sky have their nests. I imagine him to be like one of our humble peasants!

Jesus Christ is the Word of God Made Flesh. If he was made one of us, it was to speak with us in our own language and reveal to us who God is and what God wants of us. He is the Father's spokesperson. He is the prophet through excellence in the Greek etymological meaning, which is, "He who speaks in the name of another, in the name of God." His Gospel is this: the Good News of God for all people in all times.

The Gospel of the high prophet Jesus is clear and imperative: sweet and bold at the same time; it is smooth and rough, with the roughness proper to God who heals through it. It is sweet and at the same time

bitter for some consciences; it is "beatitude" in some of its pages. But it is also a tremendous curse on other pages and no less true: "You that are accursed, depart from me," those who do not live with love.[10] "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"[11]

The high prophet Jesus, with his message, entered fully into the life of all people. He brought his word through the streets and town squares, near lakes and into the mountains. He stopped to talk to the poor and the rich, to children and intellectuals of his time; he spoke with criminals and even prostitutes. Like a faithful prophet of God, he announced the good and showed mercy to all. When that was no longer enough, his words were offered sharply, confronting hypocrites who performed extreme acts of external piety while having hearts full of evil. He denounced them as "whitewashed tombs."[12] He was a "rebel" against many things, including people and situations of his time. And there is no fear in using this verb "to rebel," which is used in a purely evangelical sense.[13]

He took critical positions against the rich who were without conscience and without heart, saying how difficult it will be to enter the kingdom of heaven if they persist in their attitudes. He warmly welcomed the rich who changed, like Zacchaeus the tax collector who recognized his mistakes, his scams, and abuses of power. I commend this merchant who humbly confessed his sins and promised to make amends. Jesus did not spare a sentence of praise when he said, "Today salvation has come to this house."[14] He kept his friendship with those rich who were just, like Nicodemus, Joseph of Aramethea, and Lazarus.

Jesus Christ is our liberator. He so identified with us, so loved us, as St. John tells us, that he made the ultimate commitment: He died for us![15] He always said the truth and he always lived the truth he proclaimed. This is prototypical of an authentic leader. He detected the problem of humanity, and he immersed himself in it through the incarnation and accepted the final challenge: death. He was crucified,

[10] Matt 25:41.
[11] Matt 3:7.
[12] Matt 23:27.
[13] Cf. Luke 18:24; Mark 10:23; Matt 19:23.
[14] Luke 19:9.
[15] John 3:16.

says the Creed! And while he was dying, with his head bowed, he exclaimed in a triumph of transfiguration: "It is finished."[16] And at that moment, all the eyes of all people of all time were fixed on him. Death was destroyed by his death, sin was annihilated with his blood, and he rose to encounter God, seated at the right hand of the Father. A new Adam was made, a prototype of all of humanity, "firstborn of all creation"[17] in the phrase of St. Paul. A new person arose in the world, whose archetype is Christ!

Jesus Christ did not hang on the cross like a failure. He did not stay forever enclosed in his tomb! His life and his death were one step toward the total transfiguration of the resurrection. The transfiguration and the resurrection are equivalent in the theology of the Gospel and they constitute the central event of Christianity.

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It is precisely this event that always brings us together at the altar, in the celebration of the Eucharist, and today, very particularly, in the patronal festival of our Republic.

Jesus comes to us today in the year 1970 in the twentieth century through the Church that he founded. The Church, it is said, is the community of the baptized, and it is and ought to be in the middle of the world, a sacrament of an encounter with Christ. Here is the challenge to all baptized in the Church.

The community of all the baptized has to revive the mystery of their highest leader, Jesus Christ. It is his death and resurrection, for theirs is a "community" composed of people. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every person.[18]

"The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted; these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts."[19]

[16] John 19:30.
[17] Col 1:15.
[18] Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, par. 1.
[19] Ibid.

My dear brothers and sisters, here is the challenge that the actual world has for the Church of Christ, the savior of the world. And this is the challenge that our country makes for the Church, on this solemn day, on the naming feast, that this challenge is at the center of our Christian faith in the ministry of his transfiguration.

We are all confessed baptized, the children of this nation. Our government officials are baptized, our ministers of state, the intellectuals and professionals, the employees, the military, the businessmen; our peasants are baptized. We are baptized before anything else—even the priests, bishops, and members of religious communities!

Baptism is a holy and demanding commitment. It is not, nor should it be, a simple washing of the head, a rite of passage, or a mere social act without transcendence for the individual and for society.

To be baptized is to be squarely focused on the purpose of the Gospel. To be baptized is to accept the Gospel of Christ and its final consequences! To be baptized is to enter fully into a change of attitude toward life, toward the world, toward values, toward God. "Change of attitude"[20] was a slogan of Jesus from the beginning of his public life as a messenger of the Good News. And every follower of Jesus has to be in continuous change of attitude, turning his or her own life toward the light of the Gospel and interpreting it under the light of the signs of the times.

On solemn holy days we are used to listening to people praise the natural beauty of our dear nation: the beautiful lakes are praised, the coffee in bloom, the majestic volcanoes. . . .

And what do we say about the Salvadoran person? What will we say of all the children of this blessed soil, where all of us confess to be baptized in the name of Christ transfigured? Is he transfigured in the Salvadoran?

We have said that Christ is our liberator. He is the liberator of all people and all of humanity, of integral humanity. A person is not only a soul; if this were so, one would cease to be a person. Neither is the person only a body, because again one would cease to be a person. The person is an integrated compound, inseparable: soul and body. And Christ our Savior came to save the entire person, to transfigure it in this sense into a new person, authentically free of all situations of sin and misery, self-determining and free to enjoy all the privileges

[20] Mark 1:14.

of being a child of God, conquered by the triumph of the resurrection of Christ. This transfiguration of the person so conquered, proclaimed, and demanded by Christ and his followers has its starting point in baptism, the holy commitment of each baptized with the resurrected Christ.

And so we return to the question: Is the Salvadoran person transformed? Is the immense majority of the Salvadoran people, represented by our peasants, transformed? Is the minority transformed, the one that has in its hands all the economic power, decision-making power, control of the media, and means of communication?

There must be some painful confessions. Many baptized in this country have not accepted the demands of the postulates of the Gospel that demand a transfiguration. Therefore, those same people are not transfigured in their mind and in their heart and they put a dam of selfishness in front of the message of Jesus our Savior and the demanding voice of the official witnesses of Christ through the Church, the pope and his bishops!

And what is said of the immense numbers of people in the rest of our population, the great majority made up of our peasants? Is this great majority fully transfigured in this land of our baptism?

Pope Paul VI says in his famous encyclical *On the Development of Peoples*, endorsed by His Holiness on the most important feast day of the Church year, the day of the resurrection of our Lord, March 26, 1967, that our faith is in the total transfiguration of Christ!

The pope says in writing: "At the same time, social unrest has gradually spread throughout the world. The acute restlessness engulfing the poorer classes in countries that are now being industrialized has spread to other regions where agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. The farmer is painfully aware **of his wretched lot.** Then there are the flagrant inequalities not merely in the enjoyment of possessions but even more in the exercise of power. In certain regions **a privileged minority** enjoys the refinements of life while the rest of the inhabitants, impoverished and disunited, are deprived of almost all possibility of acting on their own initiative and responsibility and often subsist in living and working conditions unworthy of the human person."[21] Hear now the words of our Holy Father, Paul VI!

[21] Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, par. 9. Emphasis in the original.

This famous encyclical was publicly praised shortly after its appearance, in the inaugural speech of the president, the leader of our nation who honors us with his presence on this solemn occasion of celebrating the Church and the country. He promised on that solemn occasion that he was inspired by this celebrated document during his tenure. This, despite the fact that many international centers of power and money were scandalized and hid behind the usual defense mechanisms that hide the dark and more refined manifestations of human selfishness.

The *Wall Street Journal* qualified this papal document as "warmed over Marxism." The *New York Times* stated that it represented a turn to the left for the Catholic Church. It is no wonder these reactions come from the centers of the most refined materialism, since that part of the world has declared a war to the death on the Church, the pope, and his ministers. Resistance to his message has come through powerful means of communication by certain news agencies to our national newspapers. But this is news only for the few isolated and negative media outlets, not for the wider world with thousands and thousands of priests and religious who are faithful to their sacred vocations.

The Holy Father, with his encyclical, put salt on some terrible wounds of our humanity! These most refined centers of materialism, together with some minorities in our own country, would crucify Christ if he returned to his land to announce his Gospel in the twentieth century!

Conversely, the secretary general of the United Nations said clearly and unambiguously that the international body gave "with all of its heart its support for this papal document, full of wisdom"—these are the actual written words.

And the director of the Food and Agricultural Organization expressed, without fear: "If the FAO did not exist, the encyclical of Paul VI would serve as the basis for its justification."[22]

Pope Paul VI and his Church, like Christ, is a sign of contradiction. We who are baptized in the Church have given our sincere, faithful, and determined support to this papal document that coincides fully with the essence of the most pure Gospel of Jesus, Savior of all our peoples!

[22] This refers to the UN Food and Agricultural Organization.

You can be completely certain your Excellency, Mr. President of our Republic present here, and the entire government, that this line of thought is clearly evangelical. It shares the line of thought with the pope and all the bishops of the universal Church, always counting on the collaboration of the Church of our country. And finally, **in solidarity** we should work together for the total, integrated, and true transfiguration of each and every one of the inhabitants of this sacred land, a land in which we were born, a land that we love, and a land for whose good we all have worked. This fully coincides with our most valuable and cherished ideals as baptized and as citizens.

The Church, within its sphere and the government in its appropriate sphere, with mutual respect for each other's lawful scope, should work together **effectively, boldly, and urgently.** Together they should promote "just, honest, and convenient laws," according to the necessary "sovereignty" of the people in Article 1 of our constitution. What is a sovereign people? The great majority or the small minority? Which of the two groups is really alienated in this nation?

The Church and the government need to work together **effectively, boldly, and urgently** to transfigure the Salvadoran people. They live in the valley along with those beautiful lakes next to the Lempa River, on the edge of the coffee fields in bloom, on the foothills of our mountains and volcanoes, in the little communities and farmhouses, in the great urban concentrations, and in our large estates.

Only then can we call ourselves full and proud sons of our homeland; only then can we approach each other without remorse, at the feet of the Savior of the World, Patron of our Republic!

And CHRIST OUR SAVIOR TRANSFIGURED will really be our PATRON when all of us are transfigured, those baptized in his name, having been faithful to the commands of the Father, according to which we have heard today's gospel say: "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, WITH WHOM I AM PLEASED, LISTEN AND PUT INTO WORK HIS MESSAGE."[23]

Only then will all the children of this homeland of El Salvador, sign and seal, with full truth according to that which we proclaim in our national hymn, the third word that flies in the wind on our flag:

[23] Matt 17:5. Translation by the author.

FREEDOM, full, complete, and definitive for all the children of God, Salvadorans!

***** End of Homily *****

Commentary

In this homily, Rutilio Grande, SJ, appealed to the leadership of the Catholic Church and the government in El Salvador to fully embrace the social dimension of the mission of the Church articulated at Vatican II. This embrace required a concrete form of imitating the ministry of Jesus, even if that meant suffering real consequences. Rutilio began with a call to personal introspection. Second, he reflected on who Christ was and what transfiguration meant for a Christian and for the Church. Third, he addressed and discarded the dualism of the past centuries with its emphasis on the "soul" and its neglect of the "body." Finally, he appealed to the social encyclical of Pope Paul VI to encourage and push the Church of El Salvador to be a more prophetic voice in national affairs.

Call to Personal Introspection

The argument within this homily moved from the personal to the interpersonal to the social/political as it defined the nature of Jesus' mission. This is then argued as an obligation for individual Christians and the Church as a whole. Beginning the homily with the question "Why are we here?" forced introspection related to each person's motive, disposition, and availability to do God's will. By discarding curiosity and convention as legitimate reasons for attending the Mass, he reinforced the point that while this is a civic event of sorts (the feast day of the Republic), a real faith aspect should be primary. And what should this faith look like? It began with a personal commitment to make Jesus of Nazareth my "way, truth, and life," and this commitment could never be separated from the social engagement of the Church. Part of that commitment was personal transfiguration, but the transfiguration of others in one's context completes that commitment. One's personal transfiguration can never occur in isolation from others. Christianity has never been a solo sport focused only on

a "personal" relationship to Jesus. There must always be a communal dimension that includes others. This relationship to others was critical and called for "intimate and real solidarity with all of humanity and throughout history," as Vatican II stated. Such solidarity, if it was really solidarity, was not for the faint of heart as it could require paying the "ultimate consequence."

This new focus on social ministry was a serious challenge to the Catholic Church, which had traditionally been allied with the powerful and elite throughout the history of colonial Latin America. For centuries, the Church benefitted from a church-state relationship called *integralism*.[24] Under this system, the state was the senior partner in the relationship, but the Church enjoyed many privileges for its support of the state, including large amounts of land and state funding for churches and schools. There has never been a strict separation of church and state in Latin America. Vatican II called for a more robust commitment to justice by the universal Church, and this new commitment put it at odds with many repressive governments in Latin America at that time. Rutilio was reminding the leadership of El Salvador, both civic and ecclesial, that it was time to be more prophetic and to use the power and privilege it possessed to serve the majority who suffered in that context.

Which Jesus?

Jesus can be presented and understood as an abstract resurrected figure of triumph far distant from this world, or he can be the suffering servant on the cross deeply connected to this world. Often our presentation of Jesus reflects our deepest sense of what his purpose was here on earth. For Rutilio, the Eucharistic celebration was the epitome of what was required by those of faith. It was a communal celebration involving all levels of society that communicated Jesus as mediator, the Word Made Flesh, and as Liberator.

Jesus as mediator was someone who entered deeply into our reality and suffered with us. Rutilio took the humanity of Jesus seriously, especially his real interaction with people and the structures dominant during his time in human history. Rutilio went so far as to identify Jesus with the majority of rural agricultural workers in El Salvador

[24] Jeffrey Klaiber, *The Church, Dictatorships, and Democracy in Latin America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 5.

who lived a precarious existence for lack of life's basic necessities. This identification of Jesus with the poor in his context was a choice, one that is often underplayed or avoided in many places.

Jesus as Word Made Flesh spoke to us in a way we could understand; it made clear who God was and what God wanted from us. His message had positive tones of comfort for those who were poor and suffered, while it carried negative tones of condemnation for those who rejected love and benefited from the suffering of others. Jesus engaged both poor and rich and favored members of both groups who were open to his message and willing to put concrete acts of love before everything else.

Finally, Jesus was Liberator when, through his ministry and in his ultimate act of love, he freed us from all our rejections of that love. This happened concretely through his crucifixion resulting from his prophetic ministry to bring the love of God that humanized everyone in his context. He was especially drawn toward those who had been judged evil or undeserving by the religious authorities of his day—Samaritans, lepers, the sick, prostitutes, tax collectors, etc. His transfiguration became complete in the resurrection. Love had triumphed.

End of Dualism and Immersion into Reality

The faith and the solidarity spoken of by Rutilio were not constrained to a "spiritual" dimension that relegated religious action to one's private life, the interior of a church, or an exclusive focus on "souls." The Church and its mission were situated in the "world," in the "middle of life's events" where the messiness of living out what we believe takes place. The mission of the Church was not merely to save "souls." By listening to the Word of God and partaking of the Bread of the Eucharist, we literally assimilate those elements into our minds and hearts. When received properly, a Christian "revolution" became possible, one that was all-inclusive with love at its center.

What did this triumph of love have to do with the Church of El Salvador in 1970? For Rutilio, it meant entering into that context in a definitive way called for by Vatican II. For this reason, he quoted the first sentence of *Gaudium et Spes*. The transfiguration of Christ called the Church to a "ministry" of transfiguring the world—especially the world of El Salvador. If baptism was taken seriously, transfiguring the world of El Salvador became an obligation, not merely

a choice. Rutilio asked "And what do we say about the Salvadoran person? What will we say of all the children of this blessed soil, where all of us confess to be baptized in the name of Christ transfigured? Is he transfigured in the Salvadoran?"

The answers to these questions challenged the Church to reconceptualize how it understood its mission to "humanity." It could not simply care for "souls" by emphasizing religious obligations disembodied from contexts that were inhuman. Each person was an integrated whole made up of body and soul, and Christ came to save the entire person, not only one's soul. This, of course, had concrete consequences for social, political, and economic policies and structures that helped some and harmed many others.

Rutilio stated quite plainly that Salvadorans had not been transfigured. Those who had been baptized had not lived up to their commitments. As a result, the majority of Salvadorans suffered. Rutilio recognized that hearing this description applied to El Salvador would make people upset. This included both the leaders in the pews whom he had identified as well as the leaders of the Church on the altar behind him. But he also knew he had to take that opportunity to challenge the powerful of his own country. He acknowledged that North American newspapers criticized the new encyclical by Paul VI, but he also recognized that this was inevitable given that "international centers of power and money were scandalized and hid behind the usual defense mechanisms that hide the dark and more refined manifestations of human selfishness." The source of the critique was proof that *Populorum Progressio* was inspired by Gospel values, just as the reaction of the rich and powerful to Jesus' ministry was proof of his option for the poor as well as the nature of the "Good News."

Finally, Rutilio called for a collaborative effort between the Church and government to work together, each in its own legal area, to "transfigure the Salvadoran people." This call came from a shared faith in a country where everyone was baptized, and it fulfilled the civic duty of being "sons and daughters of our homeland."

Lessons for North America

Perhaps it is the individualism of North American culture or the emphasis on self-interest in our economic system, but for whatever

reason, "social" Catholicism has never fully penetrated the Catholic Church here. At a time when Oxfam International predicts that by 2016 the top 1 percent of richest individuals in the world will own 50 percent of all wealth, this is not a minor point of interest. While there are numerous sociological works on our unique form of individualism, and more than enough studies on our growing economic libertarianism, both together suggest "rocky ground" for the seed of Catholic social teaching in the United States. Throughout seventeen years of teaching at Catholic colleges and universities, I am continually amazed at how few students know anything about the social teachings of the Church. They know aspects of the Catechism, and they know the sexual and reproductive teachings of the Church. They do not know how to connect their private lives to the public demands of social, political, and economic justice. This remains elusive. I have seen this in my students in two significant ways. The first comes from a faith formation almost exclusively focused on "knowledge" while any corresponding "action" is optional. When the "action of faith" is optional, it results in a parish model for social engagement that is usually based on "charity" and almost never on "justice."

Many of the students I have taught at the undergraduate level have knowledge of Christianity based on doctrinal content. They can give me the general outlines of major Catholic doctrines, but beyond such knowledge is an abyss of how this doctrine connects to anything in the "real world." They know Catholicism has a doctrine of the Trinity; they just have no clue why that matters in their concrete day-to-day lives.

In the Catholic tradition, there are two general components comprising passing on the faith—one is the "content of belief" and the other is the "act of believing." Christianity in North America overwhelmingly emphasizes "orthodoxy" or "right thinking" while "orthopraxy" or "right action" is treated as less important. Jesus seemed to prefer those who lived out concrete acts of faith, hope, and love to those (in his time) who insisted on a "correct" understanding of faith. Perhaps this is why early Christians self-identified as *The Way*. This is not to say that doctrine isn't important, but should it be the starting point for teaching young people the faith? I have had much greater success encouraging *acts* of faith, hope, and love through immersion and service opportunities and allowing ideas to frame why that is so life-giving than vice versa. John Kavanaugh, SJ, in his book *Following*

Christ in a Consumer Society, sounds strikingly similar to Pope Francis when he summarizes the criteria for "judgment" according to the Gospel of Matthew.

> Thus, the last text before the Passion narrative is one that clearly delineates the conditions of salvation, the expression of faith, and the intimacy of God's presence in our lives. Note that it is not tithing, not sacrifice, not church-going, not even the most meticulous fidelity to sobriety, continence, or obedience, that Christ insists upon: it is our response to the least of human persons, to the poor, the sick, the old and abandoned, the hungry and thirsty, the naked, the imprisoned and unattended.[25]

How we encourage such *action* on behalf of the poor and marginalized brings us to the second problem of our North American context. Because we see most problems in individual terms, including poverty, vulnerability, and inequality, we respond to those problems as individuals—and we often blame individuals. There is probably no parish in this country that has not asked for donations for the local homeless shelter or food pantry. Catholic schools will mobilize to make sure everyone has a holiday meal, but these actions, while important on a basic level, are problematic on many more.

Let us be clear that "charity" here does not refer to the theological virtue of love (*caritas*) mentioned throughout the Church tradition. Charity, the way I am using it, refers to short-term donations that meet the immediate needs of people who lack basic necessities. First, these acts of "charity" cultivate attitudes among people that such individual actions are adequate responses to complex social problems. Second, they function like Band-Aids on a serious wound. It is easy and convenient to bring a can of food to church or school; it is much more difficult, involved, and conflictual to analyze why there is so much hunger and homelessness in a community and what policy responses might be necessary to reduce such a reality. A lack of just wages, mental health care, addiction and rehabilitation counseling, and support for veterans who return from foreign wars with PTSD and self-medicate are only some of the many real causes of homelessness. But these are not recognized because "I donated my can of food

[25] John F. Kavanaugh, *Following Christ in a Consumer Society: The Spirituality of Cultural Resistance* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 111.

and I have done what I can." Systemic problems require systemic responses—and this is difficult to sell in a society of individualism. We know the causes of many social ills, what we don't know how to do *as a Church* is respond to those causes with a unified voice.

The overall US Catholic strategy emphasizing charity over justice emerges from a Church leadership that is more comfortable talking about "personal sin" (contraception, abortion, premarital sex, euthanasia, stem-cell research, homosexual acts). With the exception of immigration and sometimes the death penalty, it seems unwilling or unable to address "social sin" and its causes (income inequality, poverty, racism, safety nets for the elderly, etc.). Perhaps this simply reflects a failure in our ability to connect our private lives to the common good, but that is precisely where the US Church needs to prophetically focus its efforts.

Pope Francis made clear to the US Bishops Conference that he wanted to see a repositioning of their prophetic emphasis, i.e., how they focus their energy and resources, without negating any aspect of Catholic teaching. Perhaps the reason for this is reliance by the Church on wealthy donors who tend to have positions on social, political, and economic issues that prefer a smaller government response. If government becomes the "enemy," no structural response is possible to address structural problems. Many of the wealthy honestly believe that individual acts of philanthropy are adequate responses to complex social problems.

Rutilio Grande, SJ, gave an excellent example of how to integrate an abstract doctrine about Jesus (the transfiguration) that means little or nothing to the average US Catholic and bring it into the very act of faith that we should be living out. By moving from the personal to the interpersonal to the social, Rutilio illustrated that the transfiguration of Christ was a call with multiple dimensions including how the Church engaged the world of El Salvador.

Questions for Discussion

(1) How do you understand the social dimension of being Christian?

(2) Which Jesus does your faith community tend to emphasize? Mediator? Liberator? Abstract?

(3) How did Rutilio connect the doctrine of the transfiguration to the role of the Church in El Salvador? How might we connect that doctrine to the role of the Church in the United States?

(4) Which "structural" sins do we suffer from in the United States, and what structural responses might be called for from the position of Catholic social thought?

CHAPTER THREE

To Evangelize We Must Act: Rutilio Grande, SJ, and the Mission to Aguilares (Year 1)

Historical Context

Frustrated by ecclesiastical politics in El Salvador and failed pastoral efforts in his hometown community of El Paisnal in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Rutilio Grande, SJ, decided he needed further training to become a more effective priest. From March to July 1972 he attended an advanced program in pastoral ministry sponsored by the Bishops of Latin America in Quito, Ecuador. The Latin American Institute of Pastoral Ministry (IPLA) was an essential step in helping Rutilio form a more effective pastoral ministry to the people of El Salvador who suffered from the social, economic, and political reality of their context.

Candidates for IPLA, both lay and ordained, had studied theology and had at least five years of pastoral experience in Latin America. The program opened with a course on the reality of Latin America with a focus on its socioeconomic and cultural dimensions. Later, candidates studied theology with an eye toward the "signs of the times," those events or aspirations where God was thought to be at work in human history. Following the path set forth by Vatican II, participants studied the relationship between the Church and society. They concentrated on the Christian perspective on change, revolutions, violence, liberation theology, and the social-political implications of pastoral work.

Perhaps the most important insight Rutilio gained from his time at IPLA was an understanding of how to educate very poor and hopeless people to change their own reality. He used a method developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire called *conscientization*. *Conscientization* occurred when an oppressed group of people both understood a problem but also took the initiative to respond to that problem in their context. Knowledge and action together was the key to social transformation. How Rutilio actually went about that pastoral work is captured in the following article he wrote for the archdiocesan journal of San Salvador *Búsqueda* (*The Search*). Pastoral workers wrote articles on experiments in pastoral engagement to share with others working in different parts of the country and throughout Latin America. Rutilio outlined, in a detailed and organized way, the pastoral mission he and a team of Jesuits embarked upon in response to their reality in El Salvador.

[*Reader's note: the following article appears in a journal of pastoral theology. It is a mix of outline and article that was used by people to implement action plans in their own communities. It presupposes knowledge of terms associated with Church ministry, sociology, and anthropology. Please see the glossary for helpful definitions.*]

Aguilares: An Experience of Rural Parish Evangelization[1]

Rutilio Grande, SJ

Presentation

The experience of the evangelization of Aguilares, as a pastoral process, is very much conditioned by the space, time, and people involved. Even within the same experience there exist different variables to consider that cannot be ignored. Thus, this theory may or may not apply to other places, even if they are similar.

In this regard, to speak, and more, to write of "experience" is very premature. It would be better to keep searching and remain quiet!

[1] Rutilio Grande, "Aguilares: Una Experiencia de Evangelización Rural Parroquial," *Búsqueda, Organ of the Pastoral Commission of El Salvador* 3, no. 8 (March 1975): 21–45.

These notes are the foundation for a global assessment that we have in mind and want to do soon. With the prayers of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Commission we agreed to surrender this to *Búsqueda*, because we neither more nor less claim this to be our experience.[2] Take this as a contribution to the diocesan process as a kind of trial, a seeking of new ways to do pastoral ministry. These are uncertain steps, a mumbled word, open to an encounter and to dialogue with those who want to continue searching.

With all these limitations we present the most salient features of the experience we began a little more than two years ago.

The development follows a chronological process, outlining the most important steps, emphasizing the points that are judged to need more pastoral attention.

I have divided the exposition in two large parts following the stages that we can distinguish in our work:

1a. Stage: Grand Missionary Tour (September 1972 to Pentecost 1973)

2a. Stage: Consolidation (From Pentecost 1973 to the Fiesta of Corn, August 1974)

1a. *Stage: Grand Missionary Tour*

(1) The Missionary Team and Its Projection

At the foundation of this experience there is a fundamental option by all the members of the Team for a pastoral ministry focused on the marginalized majorities. Such majorities are crystallized in the suburban and rural masses. The marginalized peoples are located there and these people are El Salvador.

That primary option was maturing since the year 1972, the date in which Father Rutilio Grande finished his course at IPLA in Quito. Favorable circumstances for that option presented themselves and came to fruition in the work of a "team."

The archbishop welcomed these aspirations and gave them his approval. The Team was appointed to the parish of Aguilares which had no pastor at that time.

[2] *Búsqueda* was the "Organ of the Pastoral Commission of San Salvador, El Salvador," a journal in which various bishops and pastors shared a conversation about their pastoral efforts in the particular areas.

The priests Rutilio Grande and Chus Angel Bengoechea made a one-week retreat in Santa Tecla in order to plan and organize their arrival to the parish. After looking more closely at a theory of reality through a typology of urban and rural poverty, they were sent to ask the question, "What would the Lord Jesus do in a similar situation?" They drew some tentative conclusions in terms of their goals:

* **Motivations**.—In light of the concentration of clergy among the urban minorities [the wealthy of San Salvador], it seemed urgent to insert us into the marginalized majorities, the poor peasants, the great reservoir of religious people in the country. To begin purely pastoral work as a team opened up new forms of pastoral ministry for the Jesuits of Central America who were focused almost exclusively on teaching in the city.

* **Pastoral Goal**.—EVANGELIZATION in order to recreate a Church of living communities of new people with pastoral agents conscious of their human vocation who become promoters of their own destiny and who bring change to their reality along the lines of Vatican II and Medellín.

* **Attitudes.**—First, we had to be conscientized by their [the majority of Salvadorans] reality through a sensitization and awareness of their world that would bring us to incarnate and identify with their problems. We did not want to use or domesticate their religiosity without animating them to be cocreators of a dynamic, prophetic, and decentralized community in order to arrive at a promotion that will detect agents of change, key men and women, and pastoral agents.

* **Method.**—Personalizing, dialogical, creative, and critical, based on the pattern of action-reflection-action, that would theologize their reality starting from the solidarity of love, faith, and hope in this person, here and now. To make people say their "word," be responsible and engage in the historical process of re-creating new individuals and communities.

* **Criteria.**—Priority is given to evangelization and conversion before the sacramental and cultic. We focused on the announcement of the new person who denounces those who exploit and is aware of exploitation. We want a mobile Church, not a Church that waits for

the people to come to it or brings the Church to the people but to be the Church of the people.

*** Goals.**—Removal of their own mindset and life (fatalistic surrender to poverty and their situation) in order to welcome and accept outsiders.[3] Awareness: to realize the surrounding problematic through reflection and structural analysis. *Conscientization*: a constant critical attitude in a dialectical unity of "action-reflection" in service to continuous historical commitment.[4]

*** Tactics.**—Separate money from the sacraments and worship. Give priority to the marginalized and to the community over the individual. In conflicts, be with the oppressed. Avoid the traps and the compliments of the powerful who want to monopolize us [the clergy].

*** Duration.**—A reasonable period of some years, avoiding the extremes of the past, which included merely the installation of a work of the Society of Jesus or the short-lived excitement of a popular mission. This Mission will leave a parish promoted in such a way that laypeople with one or two priests can move forward in a sustainable manner.

*** Participation.**—One of the objectives is that the layperson take his or her responsibility and place in the Church and that the priest, only by substitution, does what can and should be done by the layperson. Our aspiration is that the Mission Team be relieved by diocesan priests and is therefore open to all collaboration, participation, and integration with priests, laypeople, as well as religious.

(2) Most Notable Early Achievements

With these provisional approaches, on September 24, 1972, the two initiators of the pastoral team and the experience "are sent" to the parish: Rutilio Grande, SJ, and Chus Angel Bengoechea, SJ. A few

[3] Parentheses mine. I believe Rutilio is referring to the fatalism in which a person is resigned to reality as it exists with no possibility of changing it.

[4] "Concientización," translated as *conscientization*, is a phrase used by Paulo Freire in his seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 2006). The significance is captured in the following: "A deepened consciousness of their situation leads people to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation." (85) Rutilio was educated in this method at the Latin American Pastoral Institute in Quito, Ecuador, in 1968.

days later Benigno Fernandez, SJ, and Salvador Carranza, SJ, are summoned.

The fastest way to get to learn about a reality is to plunge into it. Therefore, after initial contacts and trials, a plan was decided on and a deadline fixed to enter fully into the work. Up to January 15, feast of the Lord of Mercy, Patron of the city and parish, the Team worked intensively in the city. After this date they would be working intensively in the rural villages. With the rains, they would return to the head office. In this manner over eight months of time—relatively short—the Team had a good initial push and obtained ample knowledge of the parish and its peoples.

Missionary Tour

(1) Urban Area—The city was divided into ten zones with many other Missionary Zones. Each of these zones was worked for two weeks. Average attendance of sixty people.

(2) Rural Area—"The Mission" is offered to all those who request it. Requests are studied and fifteen Mission centers are selected. In each one of these centers a priest and his associates remained for fifteen days. These Mission centers are developed until June 10, Pentecost, the date on which the rains began. The average attendance in these centers is 150 adults.

Missionary Method

We agreed to the name of "missions" for the resonance and connotation that kept the correct meaning of our work among the people and for the evangelical meaning it had for us. In practice, we will not see much resemblance to traditional missions, especially if we consider the methodology adopted and the purpose behind it. The path or the area of "the religious" was chosen as a starting point for the various reasons explained below.

(1) Prior to the Mission

The Mission Team made an offer of the Mission to a particular community and people responded promptly to these requests. Opinion polls of people in the Missionary Zone were completed asking which places they would choose to have a mission. In principle,

all dependence on powerful people was eliminated in terms of sites and lodging. This was to avoid monopolizing the missionaries and removing their freedom of speech as well as the freedom of the people being missioned.

A large mixed commission from a particular zone came to the parish to formalize their request and give some general survey data about the area, its people, its problems, and its conflicts. They put forward their needs to the Mission, for example, stating who wanted baptism, marriage, and other sacraments. Other details were specified and it was the responsibility of other groups to create the best environment for the Mission. The exact date of the Mission was made following a preliminary visit to announce and prepare for it. It was important to finalize details like decorations, benches, lighting, etc.

(2) Mission

A general description of a day of Mission: family visits in homes. The priest and their associates spend some time in each home. This is the way to approach the community and the particular problems within it. With the data collected in these visits and other data more systematically obtained in the continual dialogue with qualified elements there, the Team will begin to create an anthropological record of the place: fiscal, economic, social, political, cultural, and religious reality. These will be the basic themes generated that can be treated in the corresponding decoding of selected bits of the New Testament. With the associates reviewing activities, data is compared, contrasted, and codified, and evening sessions are planned. In the first hours of the afternoon we introduced a session evangelizing the children in an appropriate manner while later we conducted a larger session with adults.

Main Event of the Mission Day

— the beginning of self-evangelization

— the beginning of community

— the beginning of self-selection of Delegates of the Word[5]

[5] *Delegados de la Palabra*, or Delegates of the Word, was the unique form of lay ministry in El Salvador at this time. While catechists focused on the teaching and delivery of one sacrament, Delegates of the Word functioned more like organizers and animators of a community. They led community worship services and were trained to assist

Steps in the Central Session

— Greetings, songs of the message that create an attractive and confident environment. (The children can play a great role in creating this environment, before removing them in order to accommodate the adults.)

— Present the New Testament to all who wish, even if they can barely read. Training in how to use and understand the same New Testament. Search the text, select passages according to the problems raised by the anthropological record.

— Act of reconciliation of the community, sign of peace, brief prayer, and a song to orient the Word.

— Invitation to proclaim the selected text; it is read two or three times by different readers, a man and a woman at minimum. Among the readings they can begin making notes, suggestions, and listing questions that surround the text.

— Work in groups; invite them to divide into groups of eight to ten people as a minimum in order to dialogue about the text proclaimed. Among themselves they should name a reader who should be reading the text verse by verse; an animator of the dialogue who encourages and moderates participation; a reporter that takes down a list the group makes the whole time. The goal is to pursue maximum participation from everyone.

— Plenary session (one or several simultaneously depending on the number of assistants). In order to be manageable and fruitful, the plenary session should have no more than sixty or seventy people. This is moderated by the priest and his associates. The moderator should fix in writing and be as close to the verbalization of the people as possible and systematize the summaries given by the reporters from each group. Return to the full form of questioning the most significant points in order to deepen them through the opinions of the participants. All this should be complemented by the priest who will summarize the key ideas considered at the session.

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people in reading the Word of God and *applying* it to their situation. See Tommie Sue Montgomery, "The Church in the Salvadoran Revolution," *Latin American Perspectives* 10, no. 1, "Central America: The Process of Revolution" (Winter 1983): 71.

— Communal prayer, announcements, farewell, song.

— Meet together for a brief review with those who participated the most in the various activities. Progress and problems in the session can be evaluated as well as participation. They are invited to the next sessions since they themselves have participated the most of all the people.

Although the method in broad strokes is easy to grasp, the plot and background are more delicate. All of this is intended to encourage the motivations and teaching attitudes of Paulo Freire in his educational projects, which seek conscientized people and liberation with the marginalized.

Other Elements of the Missioning Process

In a Mission, the priest and his associates draw on all contacts—personal, familial, various groups, and the community—for all have something important to offer the immediate end of understanding as much as possible about the reality of the environment, which will become evident in the anthropological record of the place. Further, the entire Team should reflect on that material in order to try to capture the world of the peasant in its total reality and vision, in its conception and expression.

The names of those who participate strongly are especially noted, and the same dialectical method should be explained to them. These people are emerging as natural leaders, the natural animators, who are evaluated each night of work to correct and assimilate better the dialogical method. They will encourage the various groups meeting in these sessions and they will be accountable for the progress of the Mission. Thus it will happen easily that the community will elect, at the end of the Mission, its own leaders according to the criteria of responsibility, dynamism, and animation. The two weeks of Mission activity will help men and women of initiative, mobility, and influence come forth from the community.

From the first day, an emphasis should be made implicitly and explicitly in all that is done that a person is qualified if he or she is perceived as doing "service," and not as domination. This approach intends to avoid all elitism and paternalistic power players who wish to "grow the others."

Self-Selection of Leaders

We think this point is of capital importance. The institution of the Church has become fossilized in the clergy. We lament the fact that we don't have true communities. And for good reason this leads us to question whether we really have a Church.

Now, there is no community without responsible leaders. Here the conflict lies. Where to begin! Do we begin with the formation of the community or with the leaders? If the matrix of the community does not exist, from where, how, and for what are leaders going to originate? Who is going to choose these leaders? Will there be true leaders or those who only have a vocation to be a sacristan? How and where will they be formed? How will the people accept them? We wanted to leave the answers to these questions to the overall Mission meeting, as we have already noted. We try to create a process that integrates and evenly develops the three dimensions of the Mission: evangelization, community, leaders.

It is certain that we will have to put the accent on one or on the other dimensions of mission, but always having in view the other dimensions and ordering them toward each other without disassociating them or distancing them.

We believe the first push should come from the priest, but in a way that provokes a movement that can be assumed by laypeople and the communities, leaving the priest as a companion and animator of the faith.

To detect these key men and women that the community will designate as their Delegates, we look at their work in the community. Leaders emerged after the Mission process who, from their concrete actions, demonstrated a commitment to others because they gave widely and responded to others with commitment and community service.

We noted the different moments of this selection process.

— Before the Mission: there are the lists of various people including those who have asked about the Mission, those who have mobilized the parish to make formal preparations, and those who provided ideas and initiatives. We listed those who interviewed with the priest and those who made commitments and have responsibilities. Finally, we included those who made practical things like decorations, locations, benches, and lights.

— In the Mission: From the first night, attendance should be taken of those involved in doing or, above all, saying something in public. This is important even though people are not used to it and have difficulty speaking. From the first evaluation it was noted that the work of the coordinators of the Mission would be not so much to speak or do but to "encourage others to do, to talk, and to participate." They were encouraged to be leaders, not preachers, to seek the truth with others through unity, action, and organization.

This takes into account, above all, those who provide improvements, changes, and constructive criticisms. They are committing to what they would do with people, how they would engage and involve all the people. Some evaluations of the plenary session on the progress of the Mission also help the engagement process. This would require an appropriate dynamic to be used.

Halfway through the Mission the idea is launched: "after these fifteen days of Mission, will everything stay the same as it was before this new consciousness and new awareness?" And so commitment begins to form: THEN BEGIN YOUR MISSION!

In the final days of the Mission the lists of potential leaders can be reduced to the highlights for attendance, activities, interventions, etc. The next to the last night the community election is held. The criteria for the election are put forth as service, commitment, initiative, responsibility, sacrifice for others, and availability. The same community suggests the names; those named are asked to indicate their availability, the pros and cons, and according to this the community approves them and gives their vote, which must be of the majority. They are designated then as **Delegates of the Word of God in service to the community.** In practice this has resulted in one Delegate for every four or five people. The predominance of men or women as Delegates has varied in different places. The position and number of Delegates always stays open to revision. The same service to the community will be given according to the measure of commitment.

As a beginning, it is preferable that the Delegation be numerous in order to place the engine of the community within the community. This is open to augmentation from other Delegates that are emerging after the Mission, to diversify in the different services of the community and also in order to purge and self-eliminate if someone doesn't finish the work the community has entrusted to him or her.

The final night of the Mission the Delegates accept publically and individually the designation and the commitment to serve the community. From this moment on, they will be in charge of leading and caring for their community. They are not alone but are put under the tutoring of another older Delegation, or a foreign partner, or another community that will ensure the growth of the Delegates as well as the community. The Delegates will be the link between their own community and the parish or wider community.

The new Delegates should have a meeting in order to have some norms, criteria, and minimum schemes in order to meet, evaluate, and become organized to lead their community. In the final celebration of the Word, have the baptisms with a suggestive ceremony with catechesis about the commitment of the baptized that includes commitments to the community. For example;

— The Delegates elected by the community make a commitment, light candles, and pass them to

— the community that makes a commitment, which takes the light and passes the light

— to the parents and Godparents who are going to baptize, and

— to those who are going to get married; and finally to

— the parents of the children who are going to receive First Communion.

On Sunday morning, those married and making First Communion should receive the greatest possible number of New Testaments and confirm to them that they are to help "follow the Mission."

During the fifteen days, have two or three Eucharistic celebrations. The central act of the celebration of the Word will add to the second part of the Mass. These Eucharistic celebrations have as their goal:

(a) Avoid being labeled as "separate" by giving as much importance to the Gospel.

(b) Avoid making them feel or say that "now these priests that say Mass have changed everything."

(c) Deepen the sense of reconciliation as "change" and the sense of the Eucharist as a memorial and commitment with Christ.

The priest is available every evening for consultations, confessions, settling problems, etc.

(3) After the Mission

Initiating the community process is essential and delicate work requiring patience in accompanying it in its growth and never abandoning it. In the beginning it requires constant and close supervision.

(A) *Accompanying the Communities*

A priest directly assumes responsibility for the village and makes himself a "peasant" while visiting the communities. He attends its meetings, dispels doubts and confusion and evaluates with the community on the one hand, and with the Delegates on the other, the progress of the community and of the Delegation.

From the first moment we have counted on the help of foreign partners.[6] After attending a Mission and initiating them in the method described, there were those who gave an irreplaceable contribution to the community after the Mission, now that local priests were on other Missions.

These collaborators were university students with Christian and social concerns and some seminarians, as in the case of Tavo Cruz, who was ordained and became part of the Team and is today a fundamental piece of the Team in the absence of Padre Chus Angel.

These collaborators worked with two communities of Jesuits who had lived successively in Aguilares. They had a house and studied at the same time and gave part of their time to pastoral ministry in the community. The first community studied the human sciences at the University of Central America (UCA). This community actually did their theology based on the pastoral praxis in Aguilares and in the Center for Theological Reflection at the UCA. Various Jesuits in this group graduated in various disciplines.

The contribution of the young, interdisciplinary, and pluralistic, even if not exempt from tensions, is very beneficial and positive for everyone, especially for the common people. They have always tried but cannot accomplish works that can develop the natives and help

[6] I believe this refers to foreign missionaries of various orders who served in El Salvador during this time.

mediate the work of the Missionary Team. Their work is temporary and substitutive.

From this criteria were born the **Preparers**, who are peasants featured in the assimilation of this method and in leadership who prepare two celebrations of the Word every fifteen days with a priest in the home parish. They then return to other centers in their zone in order to transmit what they have received and done, acting as a bridge with the parish.

Messengers of the Zone are sent to these various centers throughout the zone from each Delegation (group of Delegates of the Word). These messengers communicate in the weekly meeting of their Delegation. There they evaluate previous sessions of the community, prepare for the next, and plan new actions and share commitments. The community should meet at least weekly in order to celebrate the Word of God.

This dynamic that has been emerging from the experience is evident through evaluations. These returns are to be reflected on at the basic level of prioritization, of unification, and a certain schematization. Even though we present this process in the attached appendix,[7] we have to take it more as a dynamic process than as something already acquired or fixed.

(B) *Palpable Results in the Missionary Tour*

— There was great discovery of the Gospel by the people: "We are now removing ignorance. . . ." "We were in the dark. . . ." An appetite for the Word has arisen and they comment and make it applicable in their own way.

— The Gospel and the situation in which they live come together quickly: "we are bringing the Gospel from the spiritual to the material," they say in their naïve verbalization.

— They begin to rise out of their magical consciousness: "One of the poor is actually able to do something?" "To conform to the will of God," and they are realizing there is no will of God that things have been the way they are.[8]

[7] The above-mentioned appendix is not present in this volume.

[8] "*Conciencia mágica*" has been defined as "a state of mind that attributes to human events a superior power that dominates them from outside and to which it is necessary to submit docilely. This type of consciousness is dominated by fatalism." See Montgomery, "The Church in the Salvadoran Revolution," 73n11.

— They have confidence in themselves: they lose the widespread complexes, the pain, the disability and discover they can express themselves.

— They begin to realize that many ills come from not "being united" and they are acquiring a sense of community.

— They start to distinguish what is primary in their religiosity and what is more secondary: "What are we doing with this?"

— The possibility of change and betterment from their religiosity is found.

— They begin to meet, to mobilize, and to see what they can do.

— The reception of sacraments as repetition and sacramentalism decreases, but the sense of sacraments as change, commitment, and vital signs increases.

(3) End of the First Stage

On June 10, 1972, Pentecost, the birth of the Christian community, a great celebration is held in the main parish. This celebration is for the emerging communities in order to ask for and celebrate the new Spirit of the communities, which serves humanity and human beings who serve the community.

Community entries are received that bear signs with various gospel texts. The popular solemn Mass is held animated by sets of guitars from various villages. The homily is a greeting to the *people of God* consisting in the first part of encouragement, to give them confidence and to dissipate difficulties. The first accusations against them will be of "Protestantism," of moving to the material and not the spiritual, of communism, of politics, of meetings that are bad. There will be concerns about who they will have to watch, who is taking the lead, and what will come from internal conflicts of power, threats, and fear. The same accusations were made against Jesus and will be made against all true Christians.

Later the principles of the Missionary Team are declared in its pastoral action and divided up in printed papers:

1 — Before everything else, we are MISSIONARIES for the entire community; it is said we are SENT to proclaim the Gospel cleanly and simply, without pretense or other personal interests, according to the mandate of Jesus to his apostles: "Go and proclaim the Gospel to all people."

2 — According to this, under no pretext will we administer any sacrament to those not adequately evangelized, for we gravely betray the Gospel and our conscience if we do.

3 — We have nothing to do with political groups of any class or party. We owe everything to the community.

4 — Our only POLICY is to be faithful proclaimers of the Gospel, where all human activities align with God in order to transform the world.

5 — We will denounce with energy and without pretense all sorts of injustice and abuses against the human person, wherever they come from whether they be private individuals or groups.

6 — Our goal is to build together with you, A COMMUNITY OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS, COMMITTED TO BUILD A NEW WORLD, WITHOUT OPPRESSOR OR OPPRESSED, ACCORDING TO THE PLAN OF GOD.

After we celebrate the Mass, we should have a popular cultural-religious party of Christian community and coexistence. The numbers, the songs, the representations caused a deep impact as a prelude to a new awakening.

This is the end of the first stage.

***** End of Part 1 *****

Commentary

There are many important aspects of this article about the pastoral experience of engaging the reality of rural agricultural communities in El Salvador. For the purpose of this commentary, it is enough to focus on two key aspects: the methods the Mission Team employed for their work and the emergence of leaders within the communities they served. Both can serve as practical lessons for the Church of North America. Rather than leading with a particular economic or political theory of change, the Mission Team kept the centrality of the Word of God as its focus. This was followed by its application to the social, economic, and political. At the same time, there was a

commitment to empower laypeople within the communities the Mission Team served. This was the key to the Mission's success.

Even though Rutilio and the Missionary Team were working in a highly politicized context, the general method for social transformation was the following: build a new Church based on the Gospel in order to create a new society. For this reason, the work of the Mission Team could properly be called evangelization. Before the new Church could be embraced, the old Church—at least what existed of it—was discarded, including separating it from dominance by the wealthy of a community and, most importantly, clericalism.

In both stages of the "Grand Missionary Tour," there was a "tactic" outlined that effectively separated sacraments from money. It seemed the wealthy had more influence due to their money, especially as it related to the delivery of sacraments. Because Jesuits took vows such as the vow of "poverty" and were compensated by the Society of Jesus, there was no need or basis to allow money to be used as influence. It was decided in advance to "Give priority to the marginalized and to the community over the individual." This ensured that underserved populations within these communities had a voice and were heard. Because the majority of clergy were concentrated in parishes around the country that had resources (the wealthy minority), the Team was careful from the start to "avoid the traps and the compliments of the powerful who want to monopolize us [the clergy]." The preferential option for the poor in terms of how to orient the pastoral ministry of the Church excluded no person, but it did "level" a community so all voices could be heard.

The second critical aspect the pre–Vatican II Church discarded was a style of leadership known as "clericalism." Clericalism occurred when the methods, agendas, and priorities of Church ministry revolved around the priest instead of the needs of the community. Under this style of leadership, the priest (usually visiting from somewhere else as the communities were too small to support their own), arrived and simply dictated how the community worshipped and what the themes of pastoral ministry would be at a given time. Rutilio and the Mission Team were careful to avoid this by first *listening* to the people and then reflecting on what they had heard. "First we had to be conscientized by their reality through a sensitization and awareness of their world that would bring us to incarnate and identify with their problems." Not centering everything on the needs or desires of

the priest was one of the stated goals entering into the Mission: "One of the objectives is that the layperson take his or her responsibility and place in the Church and that the priest, only by substitution, does what can and should be done by the layperson." Here we have the first steps in engaging in what is known as "servant leadership." A "servant leader" cultivates the gifts of everyone in a community, allows them to emerge, and uses them to build a strong community where people of faith become their own agents of change and development.

Once the Team had "levelled" the community so all voices could be heard and listened to the community so that problems could be understood, they read the gospels together. But the priest did not read the Bible and tell the people its meaning. Rather, the Mission Team facilitated a *community encounter with Scripture*, which allowed them to appropriate a meaning and action plan for the community that made sense.

The process that allowed this to happen was consistent with the method of the Mission Team from its beginning, which was characterized as "personalizing, dialogical, creative, and critical, based on a pattern of action-reflection-action." Through this process, people began to understand their lives through the Scripture passages they were reading and began to ask if it was "God's will" that they lived the way they lived. In the case of the Salvadoran people Rutilio ministered to, they became conscientized and realized it was not God's will for them to live in subhuman conditions. More importantly, leaders from within the community began to emerge naturally, and this was the most important development in building a new "Church."

Recall that one of the goals of integral development articulated by Paul VI was for people to become agents of their own change. Dependent people, in any sense, cannot be agents of their own development. Such a goal required a process that excluded paternalism or the solving of problems by well-meaning outsiders who come in and solve short-term issues for a community. Leadership in a community was vital for change that came from within communities and could be sustained. As Rutilio put it, "There is no community without responsible leaders," and it was through this process of scriptural reading and sharing that leaders emerged.

As the people read, shared, and worked through the meaning of Scripture within their small groups, members of the Mission Team observed and recorded who participated in ways that "served" others

(as opposed to ways that dominated others). Those people were later pulled aside, encouraged, and guided on how to be more effective in what they were already doing. At the end of the two-week session of reading, discussing, and integrating the gospels, the community itself chooses its leaders. In the election, the values of "service, commitment, initiative, responsibility, sacrifice for others, availability, etc.," were emphasized, and then the people voted. When the names were tabulated, those elected were asked to accept their call as leaders. After their acceptance, they were designated as *Delegates of the Word of God in service to the community*. This was the beginning of a new Church in El Salvador.

The first stage of the Missionary Tour completely changed the way these communities of poor agricultural workers understood the Church, its leadership, and their call. Paternalism was replaced by servant leadership. Clericalism was replaced by active lay involvement. Finally, a passive Catholicism gave way to an active and social Catholicism as people were asked what they thought about Scripture, faith, and prayer for the first time in their lives. The fundamental question for Rutilio and the Mission Team at the basis of every decision was the following: Do this evangelization and the style in which we are delivering it increase the agency of these people in this community to become more fully human in light of the God we proclaim?

Questions for Discussion

(1) What is your experience of how power is exercised in your faith community? Do you think it affects participation?

(2) Do laypeople have an active, even decisive role, in your faith community?

(3) While individual reading of Scripture is common in North America, have you ever experienced a "community" reading of Scripture? In a Bible study group do you ever do social analysis in light of the reading?

(4) What questions do you have about the method Rutilio and the Mission Team used? Is this a method you think might be well received in your parish community?

CHAPTER FOUR

To Evangelize We Must Act: Rutilio Grande, SJ, and the Mission to Aguilares (Year 2)

Rutilio Grande, SJ

[*Reader's note: This is a continuation of the previous chapter with nearly identical context. The second year of pastoral mission will consolidate many of the successes of the first year, but also reveal some dangers and concerns.*]

Second Stage of the Mission: Consolidation

(1) *Back to the Base: Diagnosis*

After Pentecost, the Team with its collaborators begins a period of reflection. This reflection is based on the intense activity of the first stage, on the experience and the accumulated data and even more on the reflections every Thursday morning during the Mission. The data will be analyzed, codified, and globalized in order to move us to further action.

This reflection includes:

(1) Evaluation: Bringing together disparate data to be examined critically. An interpretation and systematization of the same data is made and deficiencies are recognized and addressed.

(2) Maintenance: The accompaniment, the animation, and the deepening of the Gospel are studied in every missionary community as well as the quality of the preparation of Delegates of the Word and community animators.

(3) Planning: Pastoral work projected for the second stage is completed: new frontiers of work, correction of errors, and growth of programs to meet the work to be diversified in the same communities with children, young people, adults, marriages, and Delegates of the Word (lay ministers).

Three Important Areas of Action Concern Us

(a) Sustenance in order to purify and transform the traditional pastoral work of sacrament and cult at the parish level in a way that does not remove or extinguish the values through which it is promoted. The community will take responsibility for and participate in sacramental life. The base needs to be involved as cocreator so the community will not fall into clericalism or paternalism. Disconnect the economic maintenance of the Church from the sacramental and cultic. Pursue a greater autonomy of the communities and of the support of the priests.

(b) Growth of living communities, not so much quantitatively but qualitatively. For this, our primary attention goes to the Delegates of the communities, to the diversification of their functions; how they can be formed without falling into elitism or distancing themselves from the base.

(c) Opening new frontiers in the city that do not lead to a desperate activism or using people from outside the community. The ideal pursued is to create conditions and form people in a way that in the remote future they can be responsible for pastoral duties with one or two diocesan priests.

Parish Reality

The analysis of accumulated data and experience together with other technical means supplied by the university about land, resources, etc., will help us to better understand the reality in which we move.

Geophysical Enclave

The Lord of Mercy Parish in the city of Aguilares was erected in the year 1952 as a break-off from Guazapa, which bordered it on the South. Linda is to the North with New Conception and Tejutla; Rio Lempa is in the middle. It is located to the east of Suchitoto, whose

civil jurisdiction included the three most western villages. To the west with the parishes of Tacachico and of Quezaltepeque we served two small villages of the latter. Included in the parish were the thirteen villages in the jurisdiction of El Paisnal. At the same time, the village of La Toma belonged to Aguilares until the year 1932, when it changed rapidly into a town and eventually became the city it is today.

The parish actually covers approximately 170 square kilometers, covering the northern part of the department of San Salvador, marked by the rivers Acelhuate, Lempa, and Sucio, to the northeast of Cuscatlan and a narrow strip bordering the department of La Libertad.

The plain of Aguilares is three hundred meters above sea level, with small mountainous zones, rugged foothills, and rocky areas. The tropical climate is very hot and humid, with significant variation between day and night during the winter months.

The Troncal Norte is the only paved road crossing the plain from the south to the north. The old railroad follows the same direction, but before it arrives at the Lempa River, it takes a western turn, following the river until Santa Ana, a route of large historical estates. Suchitoto joins Aguilares through an unpaved road with daily service by various buses. The same thing happens in Suchitoto, from where there is a road gradually opening that goes through Tacachico and leads to Santa Ana.

Population

The parish comprises around 33,000 inhabitants spread through the City (10,000); El Paisnal (2,000) and the rest are scattered through the villages of the previously mentioned municipalities, more than three pertaining to Suchitoto and two to Quezaltepeque.

Socioeconomic Reality

Aguilares, recently elevated to the designation of a "city," is only forty-three years old since its founding. A large part of the adult population was not born there. In the continual internal migrations that characterize our overcrowded country, people from a variety of backgrounds have settled there.

The population consists of a nucleus of small commercial business people, simple skilled professions, and peasants who are piling up in the peripheral areas leading to new neighborhoods and settlements that lack basic urban services [like water, sewer, electricity, etc.].

The markets on market days change Aguilares from Thursday through Monday into a motley confluence of diverse occupations and backgrounds.

El Campo: the plain is dominated by the large landowners of the area with more than thirty-five large estates. The "rule of sugarcane" mercilessly eats away the little flat land that still remains. The humble peasant has to perform a continuous miracle to convert the stony rented ground, which does not serve the landowners, into a corn field. The emerging livestock ownership uses half of this impoverished land.

The three great mills of La Cabana, San Francisco, and Colima, with some other subcenters of less importance, temporarily absorb the peasant labor of the region, which increases during the harvest with workers and truckers from other areas.

Social Stratification

- The dense number of property owners who are residents in the city, whose intentions are paternalistic,[1] work with landowners and financially benefit at the cost of the worker.
- Among these landlords we can distinguish those who exploit the sugarcane as a unique activity and in the traditional way and those for whom the mill is the single most significant business interest within the agricultural-industrial trade and banking activities that manage the country.
- The medium and small landlords, who are residents here, tax the profits on the mills. Some of them are dedicated exclusively to agriculture but more frequently they are supplemented by business in the city. They reproduce the previous scheme locally.
- Peasants have their huts and small pieces of land in order to cover their sustenance and they work temporarily in the mills. Some have their shops taxed from trade with the city.

[1] Paternalism is helping people because you don't believe they can help themselves. The help given does not change the situation of inequality and poverty they live within. Basically, it is a form of charity that eases the conscience but brings about no sustainable change.

- Peasants rent the rocky ground that cannot grow sugarcane for their own small farms. They hope their harvest can pay off their debts from renting the land and buying the seeds and fertilizer.
- Many people settle in an area without the ability to buy land or find more permanent work. Basically they are slaves because sugarcane does not require the labor of other crops. These are the most exploited people and they are subject to the whims of the owners as the outdated Land Laws do not cover layoffs or years of work. The evictions are becoming endemic because nobody wants to have unwanted people on their farms that may cause conflict.

Worker-Boss Relationship

It is clear domination and exploitation. The Salvadoran Job Code does not respond to the real situation of the worker. Nearly all of it refers to the permanent worker, and jobs are considered temporary apart from the rare cases of the employers themselves. The same emergency measures like minimum wage and other tasks are scoffed at daily because their interpretation always aligns with the interests of the employer. There is the appearance of law, but there are numerous tricks that make it ineffective. There is no protest because everyone knows there is a surplus of labor. Advance knowledge of ministerial inspections easily filters into the offices of the employers. If you come to speak with a worker, it is not surprising that he feels self-conscious and fears reprisals such as being fired or other abuse that will worsen his situation. Workers realize that even the fines put on their operations from the inspections will come out of their own sweat.

While the farmers are not organized, as they could be under the law, the owners have more weapons and the workers will always lose and continue to be exploited. While land tenure and property ownership is not touched by the existing code, the only valid law will become the law of those who are strongest.

For the rest, the urban market is responsible for depleting what the peasants have gained in the harvest season and puts them into debt, plunging the rural workers into a situation of incredible misery.

Family Situation

The family is unstable, with high fertility and mortality rates and broken homes. Malnutrition and sickness are the mortal enemies of

human beings. Housing is poor, small, dirty, and miserable. The absence of electrical light, water, and sewer give these hamlets a primitive aspect where they remain unknown by the outside world.

More than 50 percent of our population is under the age of twenty-five. Given the quantitative and qualitative indices of actual schooling, it is not easy to reduce the level of adult illiteracy, a reality that no institutional program exists to change.

The best intentions according to reformists can help little with their attempts to help our people oppressed by all these influences. They remain enslaved by these personal and environmental ills, marginalized progress, and the history of the country. They have become conformist, without any recourse and no hope of overcoming these realities. They are easy victims of sexism, alcoholism, prostitution, and a high level of criminality.

If this could be said of human beings in general, it is the female peasant who suffers most when the men project their actions and frustrations upon them.

Cultural and Religious Reality

Socioculturally, our people are oppressed as well. They have neither voice nor expression; they do not know how to "say their word." The expressions that they do have pertain more to the subculture imposed by the city, the radio, and propaganda.

The fact that Aguilares is a center for people from very diverse backgrounds relegates all the cultural and religious traditions of their place of origin to second place. Tradition means little in Aguilares, which results in an ambivalence toward the pastoral process. Even if it were possible to facilitate change, because one doesn't need to overcome traditional barriers, the people lack the matrix that can feed and sustain their popular religiosity. Remove this popular religiosity and there is no other option but to be absorbed by the semi-pagan environment.

Politics and its expression is for the majority something murky, not a good thing. It is more of a circus that passes time than it is an expression of their will or aspirations to achieve a better situation for everyone.

They accommodate law enforcement and their patrols with fear and servility when they arrive at a place and try to avoid having to deal with them. They will obey and follow an oppressive leader or

chieftain, which tends to merge with economic forces, reinforced, at times with the politics of prestige. They can barely emerge from paternalistic or populist motivations.

Religiously we incorporate in our people the scheme of oppression: exploited-exploiter. The priest has some knowledge and magical powers with which he is able to manipulate everyone. God is an unpredictable and undependable king with whom we must be content. His will is blamed for all that exists and happens and is something with which "we must still comply in all things." To Him they go for certain needs and at certain times, like a pharmacy or a benefactor.

Religiously predominant in the rural areas is traditionalism, magic, individualism, the rites of passage, and fatalism. One lives the religious sphere through alienating traditions. Their Christianity is nothing more than semimagical devotions, without content, with some peripheral and confused notions highlighted by a great pastoral abandonment and the absence of almost any evangelization.

Only through a miracle of God or through that which deprives them, "tradition," does anyone confess to being a "Christian." Even if some have profoundly Christian values, categorically they don't know what being a "Christian" is. This is of grave concern to us pastors. With the aggressiveness of Protestant sects and the exacerbation of secularism of all kinds, they stop being Christians and cannot even fulfill the minimum demands of true Christianity. For these reasons, it is the hour of evangelization and of mission. Still, it is no wonder the people say about the Church: "they have deceived us, but now they are paying attention to us."

Diversified Reality

In all the reality studied, we have tried to look for the diversity of levels, necessities, and goals to achieve and answers or actions we ought to undertake. We summarize here only the pastoral reality that is our own.

Pastoral Reality

All can be said to be Christian through baptism, but nearly all are without evangelization. Catholicism prevails, as do popular religious manifestations and false values.

After the Missions we can say that a large group of twenty to twenty-five thousand people are without evangelical impact. A group

of around five thousand has some questions. For some two thousand the Gospel means "something." And we could call about four hundred people "committed" in some manner.

As our people live in the center of the coordinates between God and world, time, and history, we can affirm with the language, conscious of Paulo Freire, that the great majority have an immersed or quasi-immersed consciousness, magical and intransitive of their reality. They cannot distance themselves from it in order to objectify and criticize that reality. This reality dominates and crushes the human being who becomes an object rather than a subject and ruler. This person does not make history, and without being this maker of history, he or she cannot be liberated. A small number of people have an emerging consciousness or are in transition to one, even if it is naïve. They are leaving their oppressors—king, priest, God—there is a widening of the horizon of perception and awareness that the problems of the world raise, but their consciousness is not easily manipulated nor does it have the capacity to respond. They will be the subject of their own liberation and begin to make history. It is the man in exodus who is very appropriate to receive the Easter message from the New Man, brother of human beings and Lord of history and the universe. These will be able to build a new, open society in which there is room for the Word and for criticism, for dialogue and responsibility, to be the managers of their own destiny and creators of history.

Prospective Reality

To translate this reality to the pastoral project, we can say that in the parish is a kerygmatic level of an option for Christ and his message. Only very few are at a level of catechesis, of personal change, of initiation and confirmation on the road of the faith. There exist measurements, qualitatively encouraging even though low in number, of the dimensions and expressions of community (*koinonia*) and of the responsibility before human beings, the society and the world (*diakonia*).

The baptismal commitment is something general and merely of traditional experience. Even those who are most advanced have no global vision or even a minimum scheme within which to anchor their faith. They are drawing out elements of the Gospel that are valid but without a framework within which to understand and apply them. Christ and Christianity are reduced to a series of topics or recipes with a general commitment to be better; the expressions of

Christian life are nothing more than moralizing or a tangential encounter with Christ or the Gospel; and in terms of cultic expressions, they do not exceed the superficial or the semi-intelligible. All this does not invalidate what is vitally near the spirit of the Beatitudes.

(1) *Urgent Work*

This background imposes the following mission:

- Our mission is to GO TO ALL THE PEOPLES of the parish and to make present the reign of God.
- MAKE THEM "MY DISCIPLES," *kerygma*: to opt for Jesus—this is the evangelization to re-Christianize.
- BAPTIZE THEM—AND TEACH THEM, *koinonia*: make a community of faith—this is catechetical-liturgical evangelization.
- DO EVERYTHING I HAVE COMMANDED, *diakonia*: a commitment to change the world—this is the evangelization of actual experience.

While we cannot separate the three functions of the pastoral program (prophetic, cultic, and knowledge) in our pastoral formation here and now, it appears that we need to put the emphasis on the prophetic and use the other two to help this one.

Moreover, both in the liturgical (*koinonia*), as in the work for social change (*diakonia*), we should put the emphasis on the beginning of all evangelization: the "*metanoia*" or conversion of personal attitude toward the kingdom. If the insistence was solely on the community or toward promoting change, it could become politicized. That type of Christianity would run the risk of being weak because of a weak base. In this temptation we are not immune. In the underdeveloped village in which we move, it would be sad that the faith—our specific mission—remain underdeveloped because we promote the other dimensions more.

We think that to PREACH THE WORD without reductionism will involve the other dimensions and will be the touchstone that will purify the truth of the prophetic.

According to this, it agrees with the fourth principle that we proposed to the people of God: "Our only POLICY is to be faithful pro-

claimers of the Gospel"—to suitably and persistently pronounce and denounce according to the Gospel.

Prophetic ministry will proclaim, provoke, accompany, confirm, preside, celebrate, and verify faith in Christ and his Gospel. Such ministry will form bearers of a dynamism of values able to lead to a new heaven and a new earth, through a different society of human communities, new and free people. This is the horizon we want to create the conditions of possibility for under the constant goals and objectives mentioned above.

(2) *Approaching Our Priestly Identity*

As a team of priests we wanted to find some agreement and convergence before the glaring crisis of priestly identity. There is a spectrum of priests for everyone between the priest who only performs sacraments and the priest who only works in politics. Between these two extremes we tried to find our position.

Derived from the prophetic-priestly-kingly character of the people of God, priests are ordained to serve with the ministers of the Word through worship and animation, charisms instituted by God for the community and mediated by it.

Just as in both Jesus and the Apostles, these ministers offer prophetic service or evangelization. If anything, we should be "professionals" in the manner of Christ, Paul, etc., in the ministry of the Word.

Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel! This Pauline urgency has to be ours. But, what do we understand by EVANGELIZATION? LEAVE THE MEETING WITH GREAT NEWS, PROCLAIM THE NEW PERSON, our PASCHAL person, the whole person found in all situations and circumstances.

This person has basic features:

(a) Values

- austerity, poverty, generosity in what he or she has socioeconomically.
- profoundly religious in culture.
- dedication, endurance, and sacrifice in his or her political potential.
- the beatitudes become vital and concrete in the person, though he or she doesn't know it.

(b) Anti-Values

- dependent, alienated, oppressed.
- socioculturally he or she is not what "should be," nor what "must be."
- he or she has yet to make explicit or dynamic those radically evangelical values able to conscientize the new person, paschal, liberated and liberator, always in exodus to a new land.

We cannot exchange our alienations from the society of our origin. To leave aside values without putting other better values in their place that can support and energize them to "be more" will frustrate them and lead to greater alienation. Today they only have their religion and their machete; remove their religion from them and all you have is the machete! Therefore, this "to be more" is not based primarily in ownership, knowledge, or power, which is not liberating and even less salvific, but rather, in those realities attendant to true liberation.[2]

This is how we are going to meet people today in the here and now: as alienated but requiring the Good News—evangelization—to be consciousness-raising and politicizing as necessary dimensions, but only insofar as they are related to full evangelization. We must always have evangelization include and transcend consciousness-raising and this in turn, include and transcend political consciousness-raising. This leads us to study the ways of evangelization and to choose one.

Ways of evangelization: secular and religious (not wanting to say which way is the more Christian). They are not mutually exclusive concepts; on the contrary, both need to be included so that the goal is truly Christian. Because the culture is so imbued with the religious here in El Salvador, nothing foreign or alien will be introduced through the religious way. In other words, because we cannot divide one method from the other, we will always end up covering the other side if it is true evangelism; for our goal we can have no dichotomies: either be evangelized or be deceived.

[2] This is clearly a reference to the Ignatian value of "Magis," or the more. This is taken from the phrase *Ad majorem Dei gloriam* (Latin for "the greater glory of God"). Magis reflects the aspiration to do and give more to Christ.

We,

- under the weight of the religious in the popular mind,
- through the radically Christian values of our people,
- for the efficacy and practical viability in our environment, we tactically CHOOSE the religious way, even though strategically we agree with the objective of the secular way. We believe that this, other than responding to other contexts more secularized and more religiously reluctant, has not been sufficiently experienced by the peasantry. Nor does the secular way offer guarantees in its facticity. Further, it involves some suspicion of all that has overtones of consciousness-raising, politicization, and even the mere gathering of the people.

The religious way of evangelization should not be dismissed as ineffective or already exhausted. We believe that what has failed in our popular Catholicism is precisely past efforts at evangelization that tried to Christianize it. The experience begun in these two years, rather than contradict this truth, supports our option in the majority of cases.

Moreover, diocesan priests and the traditional Church support this option, for they want the New Testament, the traditional pastoral activity of the Church, the evangelization of Jesus and of Paul to be interpreted this way. It is certain that the secular way has found a place among the Jesuits and in the pastoral activity more recently in the secularized world. Professorships, trades, and work have been used to convey the Christian message. But the results are put into question by a sector of the population that is more numerous than the pastors.

Both the secular and the religious ways want to respond and be supported by a pastoral conception that derives from a certain vision of the Church, which is, in turn, derived from a Christology. At the end of the day for all Christians, Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Christ is mutilated when he is reduced to an object of devotion such as when guerilla sound bites refer to him as a "simple revolutionary." Jesus openly rejected political and temporal power as well as any kind of direct leadership. His primary power is of the Word

on the conscience and secondarily on what is done; the movements of conscience trigger those options. More than finished doctrines, Jesus brought values that serve for all times and which will actually be corrosive on all negative values, idols, and absolutizations. Jesus cannot be pigeonholed into specific models or programs or we run the risk of privatizing or ossifying him. He is found in the most notable ideals of all authentic revolutions. He was accused of "being political" and his followers will not be free from this accusation. Jesus was tempted to leave this ambiguity as all true Christians will be tempted. To fall into the temptation to reduce Christianity to a political program would negate the most dangerous and profound message against oppressive powers. The Christian message is more thorough than any political proclamation.

The Church and Christians must follow these guidelines to not cut off the transcendence of the Word. We ought to use mediations that are more prophetic than political if we don't want to water down the message and make it short term and partisan.

Practice

The tremendous political message—without getting into politics—of Christ, is to bring the Christian to engage in being politically conscious but not authorize or impose in the name of Christ and his faith "a determined or set political program." On occasions, Christ could fall into ambiguity, but we must not forget that Christ did not want to leave that ambiguity and that position cost him his life and led him to the cross.

Our situation has characteristics very similar to the time of Jesus. Following the line of the same political theology, whoever in the name of Christ and the community is the spokesman for the message of the kingdom cannot privatize Christ, his Word, or the actions that result from it. This person must always leave room for criticism and healthy pluralism in the name of service and the common good.

(1) *Current Situation Here*

Because of the sociocultural and religious state of our people; because of the messianic expectation of change for a different world; because of the vindictive attitudes in our depoliticized or badly

politicized environment; because of the level of Christianity and conscientization; because of the violence of the prevailing structure; because of the same option the Team made—for tactical reasons we ought to be very critical of whatever conscientization and politicization that may implicate our evangelization.

As a Team, maybe we take the slower route, but even with this way we are not free of risk and danger. This leaves room for the diversity of gifts of each Team member according to his or her different charisms. The more a pastoral task involves a decision and the Team, the closer one has to study it.

We do not intend to remove the Gospel from our people and leave them only a machete, nor do we intend to allow them to fall asleep in their religiosity under the cover of and in the name of the same Gospel. As a team we want to and came to "PUT YEAST IN THE DOUGH, NOT GIVE THEM BREAD."

(2) *Deepening*

Pentecost of 1972 signaled the end of the first stage of the Missionary Tour and of the birth of a renovated Church with more than thirty burgeoning communities animated by more than three hundred Delegates of the Word. The enthusiasm and impact produced by everyone in the parish seat must be harnessed and must accompany this momentum to strengthen these communities and make the Gospel seep into their lives. The invaluable work of the collaborators from the post-Mission must be multiplied to meet the Delegates of the Word and the communities and to overflow. This is the most favorable moment for the most conscientious and prepared Delegates of the Word to take on new responsibilities and avoid the multiplication of intermediaries between the community and the priest.

Create a temporary organizational plan and launch a work plan. The Delegates of the Word will be the operational platform, like the axel and motor, which will revitalize and grow communities. There must be a substitution and functional shift for work, which up until now had been done by the priest or collaborator. For this we must diversify the functions and services of the Delegates of the Word and give them sufficient preparation and training so they can perform with efficiency. The stage for courses and workshops has come.

Courses

We intend for the formation of the Delegates of the Word to be adapted to the reality in which they and their community live. This formation must be a response to the demands and challenges posed by the communities in their growth. We believe that if we send them to courses above the parish level for a week or more, it will make them jump to levels that are difficult for peasants to assimilate. This will take them out of and separate them from their own community. Further, it may saturate them with undigested data, which would further challenge those who do not know what to do in their community. In the best of cases they will repeat without assimilating, but in no small number of cases the complexity is frustrating. We have arrived at this conclusion from experience and through other known pastoral experiences.

For these reasons we opt for sessions that are not very long, at most a day, with homework and reflection as their basis. We intend their understanding to be practical, in a form that allows them to apply it immediately to their communities. The method will be dialogical, in groups and larger sessions, divided into sections where they will analyze their experience, codify these analyses from the personal to the community level and from these to the national and universal levels.

The central nerve is the Word of God: if it is part of their reality, it can be encompassed as part of salvation history and, as such, it can illuminate their history with a vision of faith. If part of the Word of God can illuminate the reality that we have in our hands, we can try to live that life according to the faith.

Characteristics of the Courses

- They are given in the central office of the parish or in central zones. Only as the exception have we sent Delegates of the Word to courses above the parish level.
- They are short and in doses.
- They respond to the community needs of the Delegates of the Word.
- They are oriented to the practical and work of the community.
- They follow active models and encourage participation.
- They are always based on the Word of God.

Diversification of Courses

(1) *Outside the Parishes*

Only as an exception would we send them to these courses, but they are very important for future courses for the parish. For this reason a priest is always sent who can incorporate their experience into the parish courses.

(a) **Experiential Laboratory of Peasants:** Five peasants, two lay leaders from the city, and two priests from the Team attend. It takes place in San Salvador and is rich in experiences and in future applications.

(b) **Course on Cooperatives:** Two peasants, two people from the city, and one priest attend; later more peasants and women can take this course. COSALCO in San Salvador organizes it. They will be initiating this approach to building cooperatives in the parish and in the small villages.

(c) **Mini-IPLA (Latin American Pastoral Institute):** A peasant and a priest will attend for five weeks and it will be offered in San Salvador.

(2) *Parish Courses in the Main Parish Office*

For those from the city this will be offered midweek, while those from the villages will attend on Saturday and Sunday.

(a) **Urban Catechists:** The city is divided into ten centers in which catechesis will be held on Saturday. The catechists arrive at the parish on Friday, and a priest begins and prepares the lessons with them. They use the method of St. Anne's Providence (a church).

(b) **"Community Vaccine":** Before the political climate ahead becomes really poisonous, the communities need to be strengthened so they cannot be manipulated. They need to be formed with a civic spirit that ought to animate the people, not manipulate them or allow them to be manipulated.

- **Place:** The main parish center.
- **Length:** two sections of three hours; Sundays for the Delegates of the Word from the villages and Tuesdays for those from the city.
- **Directing:** The priests.

- **Method:** Reflection over the parable of the Good Samaritan. Groups respond to various questions and detect what they mean and what they need to understand of the political.
- **Plenary discussion, completion, and agreements**.
- They are given the **Constitution of the Republic** and pointed toward the articles that support the political rights and duties at both the individual and community level.
- They are also presented a short story-parable, which the community will stage; the community will then decode each character when the priest arrives.

In the parish masses during these weeks, the Word should be focused on clarifying for the general public the posture of the Missionary Team. These issues create so much confusion in the people during times of political campaigns and they can divide and disturb the communities.

(c) **Training Courses:** These courses by the Mission Team will replace the service provided by foreign partners. They will prepare and train other Delegates of the Word in the central zones. Through a consultation with the communities, forty-five Delegates of the Word are selected to go on to be Trainers. They have to be like the arms of the Missionary Team, the link between the communities and the parish and of the new parish council. They will be given a preparation of thirty-five hours divided into five weekends in the main parish center.

- Animation: two priests will prepare a course during the week. It will be run by a priest and two collaborators.
- Content: they are developing, in a parallel manner, those topics that occur throughout the Bible and in their own situation:
  a) Historical situation: structure of sin and violence.
  b) Causes of the situation: degeneration of relations.
  c) Overcoming of this situation: return to the proper relationship.
  d) Liberation: make structures that humanize and do not oppress.
  e) Plan of God: new people as members of a new community.

- Method: emphasizes the active and the dialogical. The priest or his collaborator should direct only the overall plenary session. The groups, evaluations, and smaller talks should be directed by the Trainers. This dimension is emphasized because they themselves are trained in this method and should not try "to be preachers" but animators who "prepare the road and help others grow."

Within the rate of assimilation for the rural farmers, the maximum efficiency should be sought. For this we took into account technical aspects of the total language to better capture the entire person. The person—and more the case with rural farmers—not only learns through ideas but also through the senses, emotions, the movement. A song could be thrown out that is listened to, analyzed, and interpreted by them as a way of deepening or of providing rest and relaxation; group activities, slides, graphics, and games should also be used.

In the development of these themes this process should be followed:

(a) Decoding, to come to find **what they themselves [campesinos] say** in the biblical piece, a fact of life, a song, a game . . .

(b) Relation to our reality: interpretation **for us** in our situation.

(c) Projection for future praxis in our communities.

(d) A **leveling course**. This is designated so for a double motive: this was promoted in each community and to other Delegates who were selected as Trainers to have a new function. The aim was also to achieve some uniformity in the plan or steps that the communities would follow in the Celebration of the Word, because in the early days there was ample room for experimentation and creativity in one's own community. This was developed in the parish center, on Sunday mornings, simultaneous with the courses of the Trainers.

- Animation: a seminarian and a collaborator.
- Objective: to evaluate the diverse experiences in the preparation of the texts and in the development of the community sessions, to take the plans that would be followed in the parish by the Trainers and the communities in their sessions.

(e) **Course of the Delegates of the Word:** With the experience of the training course, five courses follow for those who have successfully passed that—nearly all the Delegates of the Word from the village. They have similar characteristics to the Trainers, although they are mixed—male Delegates and female Delegates of the Word. This is like the first level of formation for everyone. They are given homework to do during the week in their community with the other Delegates who have already passed or who will pass the short courses. In this way they will deepen what has been given in the course and they will develop with the other Delegates who are living in the same environment and problematic. This homework is in the mode of a questionnaire that the participants must bring completed to the course.

(f) **Course in the city and in El Paisnal:** The communities of these two centers followed a system outside of that followed by the farming villages due to their urban or semiurban contexts in the case of Aguilares and El Paisnal. The two communities had finally emerged with the missions they had there during Lent. It would be good to incorporate them and unify them, however possible, with the movements in the farming villages. In the respective parish centers, they were each given separate courses to all the Delegates of the Word during fifteen consecutive evenings.

- Two priests, two Delegates of the Word, one Trainer, and one collaborator enlivened these courses.
- With a similar methodology to the other courses, three instruments that all Delegates of the Word ought to use were emphasized in their training: reality, the Bible, method.

After these first-level courses in the parish center, they diversified the functions of the Delegates of the Word who unified and planned the meetings: the Trainers in the zones, the Delegates of the Word in the Communities.

Specific Courses

In order to diversify the services of the Delegates of the Word, they will periodically meet to prepare for their diverse functions. They have as their objective to share experiences of ministry, the resolution of problems, and the formation for their services to the community.

(a) Baptism Initiators: instruction on how to approach parents, give them talks on family life, explanation and application of the four themes that are given by the Archdiocese, with other complementary plans in the parish.

(b) Catechists: instruction and method that enable them to explain to children of their community the catechism of the parish.

(c) Youth Leaders: formation and methodology to form a core group of young people. As a guide, give them an appropriate agenda with plans for discussion made in the parish.

(d) Coordinators and Secretaries: formation for the execution of the monthly meeting of the Delegates of the Word.

(e) Mobile Teams: give as first steps four teams that will begin to engage the young people and adults who already form the core of the village and the city communities. Provide an intercommunity service of animation and revision within the Delegates of the Word and their communities. Cooperate with the priest in short courses for base communities.

(f) Talks on marriage preparation and the responsibilities of baptism are given periodically in the main parish office.

(3) *Parish Courses at the Basic Community Level*

These courses need to be provided in the communities and in the core zones. The basic level of the community should participate more, not only Delegates of the Word. They are not so much courses in "multiplication" of knowledge as they are in community leveling—that is, bringing everyone up to a basic knowledge of action.

(a) **Course on the relation of human beings and the earth:** Directed by eight university collaborators (of them, five Jesuit students and one seminarian; two nearly ordained).

- Method: reading of a parable that will be staged in the manner of a little drama for the same villagers after a brief training. The community analyzes and decodes the various characters and the university collaborators record the verbal participation.
- Bring in a gospel text that illuminates that which they draw out of the parable.

For this course they chose two core groups of villagers and intended multiple objectives: an awareness of their reality and conscientization for the villagers and realization of academic work for the students from the UCA. In the second place, they wanted to lift the universal vocabulary and relate themes of adults for the next set of literacy courses.

(b) **Literacy Course:** The university collaborators work with various villagers to give the beginnings of the method to three hamlets over forty-five days. The villagers who belong to various communities will continue the instruction when the collaborators can no longer do so.

- The material and the themes are prepared in the parish.
- The team of villagers will give the others two more courses, in other hamlets.
- In reality, a better prepared literacy class will be developed than before.

(c) **Courses in Cooperatives:** In the village and city a good group of people is selected who receive an initiation into making cooperatives. They choose some of them to go and improve their understanding and engagement in cooperatives in San Salvador. Later they will give talks in the hamlets and in the neighborhoods of the city to prepare the opening in Aguilares of a *Salvadoran Buying Cooperative* that is directed by Pilar. The continuation in the formation of cooperatives has been irregular for various reasons, but the principle has been the departure of Padre Chus to Medellín, Colombia, to finish his formation, when he was incorporated in the formation team of COSALCO (Salvadoran Buying Cooperative). In reality, the cooperative is founded in the parish during a time of hope and of reflection.

(d) **Permanent Formation.** After the initial awakening that creates union and mobilization, a group of good people continues formation with periodic meetings in the base communities and in the parish center. They will form reflection groups, which at the parish and diocesan level participate in meetings with district officials from the Church. They will also participate in interparish meetings as committed laypersons in the Christian and pastoral work they do. Jesuits in training accompany and direct their formation.

(4) *Culmination of this Stage*

In the process of consolidation two celebrations have been highlighted and include the Fiesta of Corn and the fiesta-tribute to the bishop.

Fiesta of Corn

Encouraged by the celebration of Pentecost the previous year, a party is to be held for villagers intended to celebrate the coexistence and creativity of the community. This has good reception and resonance in the communities. Choose "the corn" as a theme and symbol of the rural villager. The discoveries and criteria for making the party different and original should come from the most basic levels of the community. They set the criteria for what will encourage the following values:

- everything will be communal, nothing individual.
- the money factor will not detract as a determinant.
- it will be a party of denunciation of oppression and of hope for the kingdom.

The party will be prepared and held at the community level (the village) and later the best of it will be taken to the great fiesta of the entire parish community. On August 18, with their corn at the front, they will determine that this is the moment for concentration.

Each community brings a collection of corn for "corn gruel," which will be communal, and the only cost will be for processing the corn.

Each community will bring the following:

- the best ear of corn
- the best ornament based on the entire corn plant
- the best song, at the least the most original, that sings of the work and the harvest of the corn.

Each community will present a godmother, regardless of age, chosen as a model of service and work in the community. She will be responsible for all the work of women that is presented at the party on behalf of her community and will present to the public the performance of her people in the competition, etc.

One man from each community, indicated by similar criteria as the godmother, will be in charge of all the contributions of the men at the party.

Everything that could be construed as competitive should be avoided, leaving aside popular acclaim, the designation of the best, especially when they cannot be quantified or qualified by a jury chosen from among them.

In the same way, the gathering should be very lively with everyone participating. The songs should have strong messages and protests, resulting from being colorful, creative, and sung by all. Let it be a happy time for everyone. Without doubt this success will be surpassed in years to come.

Fiesta-Tribute to the Bishop

In order to celebrate the fifty years of service by our pastor and archbishop, they offered the Delegates of the Word a Eucharistic service on December 29. About four hundred Delegates were arranged by Delegations and occupied the pews of the church. After the greetings and offering, two Delegates gave the homily. The first Delegate from the village spoke on "We are Delegates of God in service to the community." The next Delegate from the city spoke on "We are Church, responsible for the new person for a new community." Afterward the bishop took their profession of faith, accepted their commitments and "confirmed" them in their community functions. At the end he gave them a "mission" and blessing, at the same time each Delegate was presented to greet him.

This is the end of the second stage, and a new relaunching to follow in the work of the kingdom.

In Conclusion

What is outlined here requires critical reflection and verification through time, confirmed by the entire experience. It would be naïve on our part to affirm that this was good if it was not.

The ministry is primarily an application of the message of salvation to all people. It is a practice where many factors combine and seek to balance tensions that are not antithetical but dialectical and are creators of a new result.

One mistake could lead one to assume that only one priest could initiate a similar experience. Some cases in the archdiocese prove this assumption to be untrue.

The fact that several priests and a group of collaborators have undeniable advantages, especially for the start, also has its counterpart. From there, despite good will, come dangers and failures that we observe. For to have abundant human resources poses serious questions for us. I will point out a number of the most notorious dangers:

- Activism and immediate answers with little critique and reflection, losing an objective view and lucidity in planning.
- "Holy impatience" to force the pace and jump over stages and subsequent flattening of values that need to be purified and transformed, not subdued or even less suppressed.
- To seek efficacy and efficiency in the short term falls into elitism and takes away from the basic levels of the community. We do not walk WITH the people if unconsciously we make it so the people cannot walk with us, and if they do not, only the elite will walk with us.
- Imbalance in evangelization does not allow Christian values to be assimilated and settled in the community.
- Conscientization and maimed Christian politicization can easily rest in vindication and immediacy.
- Danger of falling into paternalism or more so into populism, creating leaders not of service but of oppression.
- With all these doubts we must ask: Do we educate, do we enculturate, or are we domesticating and transferring their alienation? Do we comply with the Pauline motive "For freedom Christ has set us free?"

We glimpse these and other dangers; these tensions are also a horizon, which we always reach whenever we put these conditions as the manner in which we walk.

We dare to advance some guidelines of these necessary conditions in our case, but they will be helpful for others. They are applicable

at various levels: the personal, the parish, a zone, the vicariate level, etc.

(1) **Where are we**: A clear vision of the reality together with and from the moment we live as a pastoral opportunity, as a "Kairos of Salvation."

(2) **On what we can rely**: Analysis of human resources from the base to the top and the diversification of the same. We have to walk the road WITH them, not only FOR them or FROM our reality. We need to know on whom we can rely and on whom they can rely.

(3) **Where are we going**: We need clarity for the short-, medium-, and long-term objectives and goals. Without this clarity we are walking blind. We do not want to change them into snipers or into conservative fish of a state, who if they don't paddle, will be swallowed by the current.

(4) **How we will walk**: From what is stated above, it follows that there is unification; if it is not possible to work in a team, at the least there must be coordination. And to the contrary, if confusion in the people results, one destroys something while the other claims to build it up.

(5) **Where do we begin**: We cannot cover everything. We have to establish priorities that conform to the objectives. We should not be content and think "we have already done something." Multiple methods will be chosen, with tactics that radiate outward, through zones that indicate the Church is awake.

(6) **At what rate will we go**: All that has been said before will be conditioned to walk WITH others. At the rate they go, they can and should go. The best approaches can burn themselves or the people they intend to serve if the rate and methods are not suitable for the context.

(7) **What motive**: All of this assumes great transitivity, mobility, reflective attitudes, and critical dialogue; continual conversion will assist us very well in preaching, but it will cost us to enter that conversion. This should be perhaps the beginning of any approach if we want to evangelize ourselves and evangelize others.

A Final Word

In everything, this process should give the impression that the Prime Actor is a little withdrawn in the dark. We try to advance the Reign of God. "First God" is a popular saying of profound significance.

This Reign is among us; it must be raised up and done explicitly. This is our work and for this we are workers. But we do not want to consider ourselves useful before it begins. We will take ourselves too seriously, distrust God, if we do not realize the work is His. Following Jesus and putting our trust in him, we make networks: we prefer to consider ourselves useless after having done what we had to do.

We plan a general evaluation of the experience. Before this it is premature to advance results. After making a "pit stop" we will see whether to continue, straighten the path, set back, or seek a change! We only intuit that something has to change.

The beginning was a challenge; it still is today, and perhaps more so. In any case, it is encouraging that "the road is made by walking" in order to announce to the poor the good news of the kingdom of God.

Aguilares, El Salvador
In the Parish of our Lord of Mercy
January 15, 1975
By the Missionary Team
Fr. Salvador Carranza, SJ

***** End of Article *****

Commentary

The crucial aspects of the second part of this Missionary Tour include the extensive social analysis of Aguilares, the distinction between religious and political starting points for evangelization, the continued and ongoing education of Delegates of the Word, and finally the commissioning of leaders with a liturgy specifically for them. All these points can serve as lessons for the Church of North America if they are adapted and transposed to our context.

The social analysis used by Rutilio and the Mission Team was more detailed and profound than the social analysis in his 1970 article

Violence and the Social Situation (see chapter 1). In his evaluation of parish reality, Rutilio argued that effective ministry was predicated on first bringing together various forms of data to be analyzed critically. Various forms of sociological and anthropological data needed to be collected, analyzed, and interpreted in order to better understand both the macro and micro reality of the people being served. The analysis by Rutilio utilized the University of Central America and its Institute of Public Opinion and included a focus on the following realities: the geophysical, population issues, socioeconomic reality, the rural village, social stratification, worker-boss relationships, family situations, cultural and religious reality, and pastoral reality. Through a careful consideration of each, the pastoral team arrived at enough knowledge of the situation to adequately shape its ministry. Rutilio exemplified the use of sociology and anthropology in his analysis of his own context for the purpose of evangelization. Without understanding a context thoroughly, evangelization will fail. Also note that he was not afraid to critique the Church, its ministry, or the state of "faith" of the general population.

Second, the starting point for mission activity was a very important decision. Many Jesuits and other diocesan priests were beginning with what Rutilio would call the "secular" way. This approach educated people about their political reality and how to respond to it. This did not exclude an emphasis on faith, evangelizing, or ecclesial development, but it put these second in importance. Rutilio and the Mission Team thought that while they agreed with many of the goals of the "secular" approach, for many reasons they preferred to begin with the "religious option."

The main concern of the Mission Team was to avoid a politicization of the faith, even though they wanted a faith that was intensely "political"—i.e., a faith concerned and deeply involved in shaping the social, political, and economic landscape around them. The danger occurred when Jesus was used to advance a specific agenda, political party, or group of combatants in a war. He was then reduced to the principles they put forward. He could be used as a prop for some platform or agenda that could have been, in fact, un-Christian. If one began with the Gospel and asked about social reality in light of the Gospel, then certain responses to the world, such as employing violence to advance social change, became unacceptable. Important in all of this was to avoid two extremes. The first was a politics that

was never truly Christian. The second was a faith that failed to engage social reality. As Rutilio says, "We do not intend to remove the Gospel from our people and leave them only a machete, nor do we intend to allow them to fall asleep in their religiosity under the cover of and in the name of the same Gospel."

Third, training the chosen leaders of a given community was of utmost importance. The Delegates of the Word began a training process that transformed both Church ministry in rural areas of El Salvador as well as the communities within which these people lived. The courses for the Delegates were carefully planned and offered—and the primary collaborators were professors and Jesuits from the UCA. Their characteristics included (1) that they be given in the parishes that unite the various communities—only in rare exceptions should they be offered at the diocesan level, (2) they were short and in small doses, (3) they always responded to the community needs faced by the Delegates of the Word, (4) they were oriented toward practical and communal work, (5) they always followed active models of participation, and finally, and most importantly, (6) they always were based in the Word of God. In addition to these characteristics, a variety of courses were offered to appeal to various backgrounds, age groups, and learning styles. At nearly every level, Jesuits from the UCA were involved.

In each case the purpose of the course was to cover concrete topics that could immediately be applied to the community. According to Teresa Whitfield, the author of *Paying the Price: Ignacio Ellacuría and the Murdered Jesuits of El Salvador*, the UCA Jesuit participation in creating and teaching these courses was particularly offensive to the government.[3] Essentially, they put the resources of the University of Central America in service to the ministry of priests like Rutilio Grande, SJ. Resources such as the Institute for Public Opinion or the Institute for Human Rights were not theoretical supports but the source of direct and concrete data used by the Church to evangelize its people more effectively.

For example, of particular interest for the Mission Team and Rutilio was teaching communities how to use agricultural cooperatives. In a country with vast inequality in land ownership and agricultural

[3] Teresa Whitfield, *Paying the Price: Ignacio Ellacuría and the Murdered Jesuits of El Salvador* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995), 62–65.

production, one way to respond collectively for the poor was through the organizing of cooperatives. In a context where death by hunger was not uncommon, this ministry was in direct service to life! Through cooperatives, poor farmers who were helpless as individuals could pool their resources and afford the various components of agricultural production as a group (seeds, fertilizer, etc.). In like manner, a better price was possible at harvest time if groups of farmers sold their products together in bulk. Of course this undercut the profit margins of major agricultural producers—and this threat to profits, as well as the collective political will of more independent rural farmers, eventually led to serious and violent conflict. Power shifts sometimes result in violent responses.

Within parishes, especially rural parishes, the Team instituted a program called the "community vaccine." The program "vaccinated" the communities against the corrupt politics of El Salvador and allowed them to truly exercise their democratic rights. The Gospel would introduce the community to the meaning of collective responsibility and values that were Christian. "Before the political climate ahead becomes really poisoned, the communities need to be strengthened so they cannot be manipulated, and they need to be formed with a civic spirit that ought to animate the people, not manipulate them or allow them to be manipulated." The concern here was about the "politics of usual," where small communities were given foodstuffs or promised whatever they needed (usually roads, running water, electricity, etc.) in return for votes.[4] This community vaccine took place in the parish in two parts, which were three hours each in duration. The priests directed it through a reflection on the parable of the Good Samaritan. Groups responded to various questions designed to illicit their own political situation as well as what they understood to be "political in their context." All of this was animated by the Word of God. In this way, evangelization led to a political consciousness that empowered small rural communities to resist political manipulation.

Other courses included civic education. "They are given the Constitution of the Republic and pointed toward the articles that support the political rights and duties at both the individual and community level." Other forms of learning included acting out scenarios and

[4] I have personally witnessed in Latin America the delivery of rice, beans, and oil to families in exchange for promises to vote for a particular candidate.

using theater as a teaching tool. By staging scenarios and acting them out, all people, regardless of literacy, could understand and appropriate a particular religious or political lesson. At the close of the course there was a plenary session with a definite completion as well as agreements on how to proceed with concrete issues and courses of action.

Another level of coursework was known as "training courses." Forty-five Delegates of the Word were selected to be Trainers for other prospective Delegates (the poor were teaching and empowering the poor.) Their preparation was comprised of thirty-five hours over five weekends and was held in the main parish center. The teaching of this group was done by two priests and two collaborators from the UCA who developed, in a parallel manner, those topics that occurred throughout the Bible and in their own situation. These topics included the historical situation of structural sin and violence, the causes of the situation resulting in the degeneration of relations, and the overcoming of this situation and return to the proper relationship. Other topics included liberation when new structures were created that humanized and did not oppress and finally a focus on the "Plan of God" that included new people as members of a new community.

The method used to teach this course was dialogical; the priests and their collaborators only directed the final session. The groups, the evaluations, and the smaller talks were all directed by the Trainers who "should not try to be 'preachers' but animators who 'prepare the road and help others grow.'" Again, various methods of delivery were used to convey information and to communicate a reflection on their reality. "The person—and more the case with rural farmers—not only learns through ideas but also through the senses, emotions, etc." In all the methods used, there was a three-part process that was followed. This included "decoding, to come to find *what they themselves say* in the biblical piece, a fact of life, a song, a game," relating this to their reality and projecting it for future action in their communities.

The last stage of these courses was given at the basic community level and was not so much about the "multiplication of knowledge" but rather "community leveling." By community leveling, Rutilio and the Mission Team meant that certain skills, ideas, and perspectives needed to be shared by everyone in a community, not just by leaders or some leaders. Thus community leveling was a way of standardizing knowledge and skills of evangelization and organization while avoiding elitism.

Fourth and finally, the liturgy to recognize and validate the leaders chosen by the community and trained by the local Church was of vital importance. For Rutilio and the Mission Team, the culmination of the second year of evangelization took place in two multicommunity celebrations—one was the Festival of Corn, where the "co-existence and creativity of the community" was celebrated. The other was a festival-tribute to the archbishop, which included the recognition and commissioning of the Delegates of the Word. Both celebrations deserve a closer look.

In the Festival of Corn, the corn and its production were chosen as the theme and symbol of the rural peasant. The preparation and creativity for the liturgy, how it was made unique and special, came from the most basic levels of the community. The criteria for the events included that "everything will be community, nothing individual; the money factor would not detract as a determinant; it will be a party of both denunciation (of oppression) and hope (for liberation)." The fiesta was first celebrated at the village or hamlet level and later at the parish level, which included various communities. Each community brought a collection of corn for the communal "corn meal" and the only charge was for the processing of the corn. Each community brought their best ear of corn, the best ornament created from a corn plant, and the best song about the work and harvest of the corn.

This liturgy is notable for integrating what is most important to the people as they lived their actual lives—the production of basic foodstuffs. By honoring and integrating these dimensions into a liturgy, it was a way of offering to God and bringing God into the basic work of the community to feed and clothe itself. Because rural agricultural workers were despised as poor, dirty failures, this liturgical approbation of their lives and work gave dignity to a people when almost no one else did.

Finally, the fiesta-tribute to Archbishop Chavez y Gonzalez was to honor his fifty years of service as archbishop; the culmination of this was the Eucharistic service. It was the moment Rutilio chose to validate the leaders chosen by the community. About four hundred Delegates of the Word gathered in the pews. After the greeting and blessing, two Delegates gave the homily. The first Delegate spoke on how they were "Delegates of God in service to the community." This homily affirmed their call from God to serve. The second part of the

homily was titled "We are Church, Responsible for the New Person for a New Community." This part affirmed their call from their community in order to serve it. The two parts together, called by God and invited to serve by their communities, established them as "ministers" in the theological sense. Following the homily, the bishop accepted their profession of faith, "accepted their commitments and 'confirmed' them in their community functions." Now they were lay ecclesial ministers.

The purpose of this ceremony was to validate the call and ministry of the Delegates of the Word by the highest authority in the Salvadoran Church. This bestowed legitimacy on their work as they formed new base-level communities. Note that these lay ministers were always in communion with their bishops and even commissioned by them. Allowing them to give the homily while the archbishop listened was an act of servant leadership that bestowed authority and empowered them to be "Delegates of the Word" in the literal sense.

Questions for Discussion

(1) In evaluating the "pastoral" reality of the people of El Salvador, Rutilio is critical of the traditional role of the Catholic Church and of priests in the oppression of the people. How self-critical has your faith community been in how it understands itself and its mistakes?

(2) How is "faith" and its relation to the "political" managed in your faith community? Are there any lessons we can learn from Rutilio's approach?

(3) What role do laypeople have in the evangelization of the Church in your faith community? Are they well trained? Are resources made available for their education? Are they validated by the highest authorities?

(4) Rutilio ends this article on the "Grand Missionary Tour" with a humble list of possible errors. What does that say about him and his work?

CHAPTER FIVE

Servant Leadership and the Empowerment of Lay Ministers: Homily on the Third Festival of Corn

Historical Context

The following liturgy presided over by Rutilio with a homily was given at a time when tensions were rising between the Church, landowners, right-wing political organizations and their militias, and landowner associations such as ANEP (Association for Private Enterprise), which opposed land reform. The tone is engaging, and the language used is quite different from the formal prose of his earlier articles. In style, this homily is much closer to the people who inhabit the poor rural communities where he served. Rutilio was very strong in his own characterization of the problem as he exhorted people to struggle for their own dignity. He concludes the homily with sections that reinforced the main themes of the "Grand Missionary Tour" completed two years before.

Throughout the two-year "Grand Missionary Tour," Rutilio and his Missionary Team "established ten urban and twenty-seven Christian Base Communities (CEBs), training 326 catechists and Delegates for various responsibilities, including prebaptismal instruction (37); catechesis (38); youth work (18); music (72); founding and encouraging new Christian Base Communities (58, of whom 17 moved on to continue the work in other communities); and assisting in various courses (29)."[1] Often the Delegates of the Word who had been trained

[1] Tommie Sue Montgomery, "The Church in the Salvadoran Revolution," *Latin American Perspectives* 10, no. 1 (Winter 1983): 105. See also The UCA Editors, "Rutilio

by the Church, and specifically by Rutilio in Aguilares, assumed leadership positions in local political organizations. "In the rural areas many priests and religious women offered courses for training catechists and 'Delegates of the Word.' The catechists and the Delegates were often the leaders of the peasants' unions."[2] This relationship between Christian Base Communities and social and political organizing is well documented.

> Despite differences in style and scale, Christian Base Communities in both rural and urban areas helped a large number of Salvadorans to develop a critical understanding about the larger political situation, identify their interests, and acquire organizational skills. From there, Christian Base Community members often became involved in organizations such as the Christian Federation of Salvadoran Peasants (FECCAS) and the Union of Workers in Rural Areas (UTC), which drew many leaders and activists from Base Communities in areas like Chalatenango and Suchitoto. Despite the participation of many members, most religious communities maintained a religious identity distinct from popular political organizations.[3]

This overlap between Church leaders and political and social leaders was inevitable. The pastoral strategy of both Vatican II and Medellín was to develop lay leaders who would transform the world in the direction of the kingdom of God. "The laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God" (LG 31). In light of such a statement, it would have been impossible to separate one's faith and its commitments from the social, economic, and political world one inhabited.

Grande, Mártir de la Evangelización Rural" (Rutilio Grande, Martyr of Rural Evangelization), in *Collection: The Church in Latin America*, vol. 2 (San Salvador, UCA Editores, 1978), 70–73. Before, during, and shortly after the civil war, many books were written by a group of anonymous editors at the UCA who remained anonymous for reasons of personal safety.

[2] Jeffrey Klaiber, *The Church, Dictatorships, and Democracy in Latin America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 173.

[3] Anna L. Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion: Progressive Catholicism in El Salvador's Civil War* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 59.

Homily on the Third Festival of Corn, August 15, 1976[4]

Rutilio Grande, SJ

Animation of the Eucharist by Fr. Rutilio Grande

(1) ***Beginning-Salutation***

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit . . .

We have crossed our bodies, with the cross of our Lord, as a sign of history, walking behind the Lord who is here hanging, a symbol of how he died for a commitment that followed from his mission in service to humanity.

(2) ***Reconciliation***

How is our Mission going in each community? How does our Mission of service continue and grow with others in different villages? I ask myself and all of us perched up here, "How is our service to others going?" Let us make a sincere review of how we are following the Lord in the construction of His kingdom. Let us take a few moments of silence. . . .

In this Mass, let us recognize our trespasses that we have made in all the days we struggle to build the kingdom in this world, a better world, a world that will become what we are going to share in this Eucharist and in the cornmeal of the Feast of Corn; today the day of Mary of the Assumption, rural women's day, the Fiesta of Corn in our community.

Humbly, let us all sing.

While the choir sings the verse all should remain in silence until the choir has finished. Afterward we all cry out to God asking for forgiveness and repenting to our brothers and sisters and to God present in them.

Choir: *Because there is love that is just in word,*
Because there are children without a home,
Because men are killed and lie,
Because they are blind and forget to love . . .

[4] Rutilio Grande, "Homilía en el tercer festival del maíz," in *XXV Aniversario de Rutilio Grande. Sus Homilías*, ed. Salvador Carranza, Miguel Cavada Diez, and Jon Sobrino (San Salvador: Centro Monseñor Romero, UCA, 2007), 57–72.

People: *Lord, have mercy on us, Lord have mercy on us . . .!*

If we have the will to change, if we want to rise above our selfishness, our weaknesses, our failures, our lack of confidence or weakness in the following of the Lord, if we are willing to change . . .

God, our Father, have mercy on us.

(3) *We Pray*

And now, with the entire universal Church, we pray.

— We pray with all our villages and hamlets.

— We pray with the rural communities and the city.

— We pray with the entire universal Church everywhere that is moving forward, through small communities.

— We pray with the bishops who yesterday were expelled from Ecuador, Bishop Proaño and the faithful bishops of the Lord.

— We pray with all the persecuted of the country in the name of the Gospel.

— We pray with all those who struggle for a better world.

In this Fiesta of the Woman, faithful to the Word of God, we pray: (prayer sung).

We sit in order to hear the song that will help us to understand the Word of God.

Choir: *Your Word gives me life. Your Word is eternal!*

(4) *Proclamation of the Gospel*

Proclamation of the Good News according to St. Luke: chapter 1, verse 39!

(5) *Homily*

Brothers and sisters, the Word of God is abundantly offered to us on this day when the universal Church celebrates this woman named Mary. We call her the Mother of the Church for her humility and because she is a servant to others.

And what a happy coincidence, that on this day we celebrate the Fiesta of Corn. We have wanted to celebrate the rural village woman, the quintessence of our people who are the great majority, rural villagers, and of the city where many people have come from the rural village to try their hand in business or in the stands that are out there in the market.

Today, then, on the day of the Virgin Mary, the day of the rural village woman in our community, and in the Fiesta of Corn, be open to the Word of God so that it can speak to these brothers and sisters of ours as we celebrate the Eucharist.

We know not everyone can be here—and why is there no woman here? That's right; we can't recognize every bridesmaid here. As it is, there are twenty-four; some have arrived late. Perhaps over there are the poor, the lost, those who can't come in; in addition, in this country of *machismo*, today we are men who want to sing to the women. Perhaps they want to ask forgiveness and finally focus on the figure of the woman within the life of the Church in service to the world.

Let us first hear from these brothers (laypeople). And first let us listen to this brother of ours from the community. All those who will share their thoughts with us today are taken from communities throughout the area. Here are represented groups from rural villages. So we are going to hear this brother of ours. Among these is a brother who has ceased being a "master," for the Gospel. He preferred to leave his duty for the service of the Lord. It is true! He saw that he could not be both master and servant of his brothers, of these our brothers. There is someone who had to do this!

Participation of the Rural Villagers Who Gave Testimony in Light of the Gospel.[5]

— Concluded by Fr. Grande

Dear brothers and sisters, I did not want things to stretch on too much without mentioning things we have barely talked about. I think

[5] Dialogical and participatory homilies are very common in Latin America, including El Salvador. People feel free to raise their hands and ask questions as well as put forth opinions on what they think Scripture means for the community. It seems Rutilio institutionalized this and always gave the common people an opportunity to participate in the homily.

it is an important occasion this year and I cannot conclude with what these brothers of ours have just said. Therefore, I want to say a few things.

Significance of the Magnificat

Following this beautiful prayer, this song of Mary that we call the Magnificat, the same prayer sold there in baskets (in the market) in one of the brochures at the door of the cathedral or in the large churches out there—probably in Chalatenango. Those who have closed the churches are selling the Magnificat—true?!

But they do not realize what the Magnificat is. The Magnificat is something explosive. Apparently they think it is for when "one has lost a cow and then pray the Magnificat." "When I have to put up with a bad woman who is chasing my man, I pray the Magnificat." "I go to buy it in the cathedral; they say that they sell the brochures there."

But man, no! The Magnificat is the most terrible thing there is. The Magnificat wants to say in Latin the prayer for the excellence of Mary. Because it left her lips, because she said, "My soul magnifies the Lord"; namely, the woman climbing the mountain released her tongue like our brothers and sisters in the rural villages have been released.

And there she began to say this beautiful prayer, which will hopefully not be used, as they say, to charm snakes, nor for when you have lost a cow, nor when you want to put a spell on someone, nor should it be something we only buy there in the brochures. It is here in the Bible, in the Gospel.

History and Actual Sense of the Magnificat

Our brothers (those villagers who shared their perspective earlier) have very nicely said that Mary is the servant. When Elizabeth heard the voice of Mary when she arrived at her house, she thought, "How is it possible that the mother of my Lord comes to me?"

But, Mary!

Ah, no Elizabeth! I am the servant of the Lord. So in everything great I have done, the power for this is from the Lord.

And she began that beautiful prayer.

"My soul praises the Lord and my heart is made happy in God, my Savior, for he has looked with favor on his poor servant, and from now on all generations will call me happy."

It is said that Mary has been chosen as a Queen forever like a beautiful woman. But she does not go and measure her waist, nor does she buy the votes of those who do business there in the parties in the Sheraton Hotel.[6]

"Because God has looked with favor on his poor servant, all generations will call me happy, because the Mighty One has done great things to me. Holy is his name. He will always have mercy on all those who fear him."

Why? Why are there people out there, those who feel very superior to everyone else, those who have no fear? They have no fear of God!

"God has done great things in me." Now we have discussed that!

And who are those who have no fear of God? Those who have reported here on our father and our brothers have no fear of God.[7] Those who get up in the morning and make the sign of the cross have no fear of God.

Gesturing the Sign of the Cross

In the name of coffee! In the name of coffee! In the name of coffee!

In the name of sugarcane! In the name of sugarcane! In the name of sugarcane![8]

I have said before, but it must be repeated again and again. To the powerful who climb down from their high places; to the self-sufficient, because you have gods here! And to the humble who side with them; the humble who admire and try to be like them. To those who hunger they will be full of everything they need, while the rich and wicked of heart who don't want anyone to have porridge, they will have nothing more. Those who want everything for themselves but do not want to share with their brothers in the Eucharist of fraternity—to these barbarians, right? We say:

"He has brought down the powerful and sent the rich away empty-handed." This is so because they are Cains, because they are cruel,

[6] The Sheraton Hotel was a famous landmark hotel in San Salvador where the power elite often held parties. During the civil war, foreign journalists stayed there.

[7] Rutilio knows the community has been infiltrated by outside "spies" who report on those who are active in organizing the poor. Many of those people identified would later be disappeared and killed.

[8] This refers to landowners whose "functional god" is their wealth that comes from what the land yields, coffee and sugarcane.

and because they are selfish members of the National Association of Private Enterprise.[9]

"Help the Nation of Israel, his servant. Do not forget to have compassion, according to your promises, to our forefathers, to Abraham and his family, forever."

Mary stays with her cousin for about three months, and after about three months she returns home. But she stayed for three months. Here the gospel does not say it, but we can interpret it. Elizabeth was going to have a child, the pregnant cousin, and Mary had to go look for firewood, for water, and wash the old clothes of Zachariah and Elizabeth. There she was humbly serving instead of being paraded through the whole region (like the ritual Marian processions of today).

Look closely at who Mary our Mother is. She is our model of service on the road behind the Lord in the Church.

Congratulations to the Communities

And pardon me, but I want to congratulate the communities in this Eucharist for so many good things. Greetings and good wishes to all our brothers and sisters from different parts of this area who have brought us news. They remind us that our faith is not in vain among you in your communities, in the parish, and throughout the country.

Faith is expressed in actions according to biblical language: Faith has no value without action! There is a song out there that says "It is not enough to pray." Be careful! We have not said that "there is no need to pray." It is not enough to pray! Like this, then, the mere intellection, the understanding, the mere word is not enough. Like checking if it is actual money that I have, the Word is verified *in action*, as it is said, according to the Bible.

So, congratulations to all our brothers and sisters! Congratulations, because the Gospel is closely linked to your life. You have lowered it from the abstract. We are going to hear it later in our songs; we have already heard it in the words of our brothers and sisters. And

[9] Rutilio often used the term "Cains" when discussing those who perpetrated violence against others out of economic or political self-interest. Such references evoke God's response to Cain's actions. This was an association in El Salvador strongly opposed to the land reform. See Phillip Berryman, *Stubborn Hope: Religion, Politics, and Revolution in Central America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), 87, 195.

we will hear it also in the Mass that will follow there on the platform, in the song that announces and denounces. Good News has come to us.

We are happy because from the beginning our concern was that the Gospel be linked to your life in the first Mission and remain in the Mission that never ends.

The Identity of the Christian

Dear brothers and sisters, this is our identity: *we are Christians if we follow the Lord*.

The motivations of Jesus Christ, those motivations he had, these are our profound motivations and represent the values of the Gospel. We want to have the internal motivations that he had in our lives and in how we move forward, although we know this may have consequences for us.

When we organize ourselves, when we join a village organization and work in solidarity with each other, these motivations of Jesus are the motor of our movement through the parish and through the communities of our country. These profound motivations are from the Gospel: we want a new world. All who minister as a result of the global work of the parish should carry the label of a Christian and not only as a cover. This must be the deep root of their validity and of their being, in the overall work of the parish, in our community, and in the numerous communities throughout the countryside and in the city. All of you, the one who spoke earlier and all those perched here, we are all responsible together. Because of this, the message of Corpus Christi (Body of Christ) and of all the great fiestas is *Christians, we are the parish!*, not the bricks and walls of the temple. We are all responsible.

Points to Emphasize

My friends, I ask of all of you for the following: please do not neglect, minimize or disregard anything in this overall process of evangelization that we are doing at various levels.

(1) First I want to mention the children who are entering into the Church community through the commitment of their parents. Hopefully the baptismal talks will be thorough. Why? The little children will see that you mean to follow Jesus Christ according to the model that the woman Mary presents us in the Magnificat. Let's move forward with these baptismal talks, well run and well done. And the

Delegates of the Word, you will be in the forefront of this renewed catechesis for children.

If you look carefully, in any formation that is out there, you will see how the children fight because they hear and see everything that is happening around them. You have to orient them according to the model and values of the Gospel, and that is the commitment of parents.

Don't go walking around looking for someone else to teach them!

Look! Tancha will teach catechism to the children!

You are the father! Why are you engaged to be married to Juana? Take responsibility for passing on the faith!

So the model is Mary, this woman-mother, this woman who was so loved by God. This is the renewed catechesis—to serve others with values inspired by the Gospel.

(2) Second, I want to discuss the importance of the celebrations of the Word in the community.

The celebrations of the Word are the axis and center of Christian dynamism in each village and hamlet and of all the works that are promoted. This includes the organizing which, without Christian values, does not make any sense for us. So there must be a Celebration of the Word in each community, in each hamlet, and I want there to be real interest in it.

Consequences follow from this!

These Celebrations of the Word have primordial importance in each community; everyone should support them and do everything possible to make them work out well.

All people should participate who have the will to change and has a humble and sincere heart in order to renew their lives, their communities, and the country, through a chain of organized communities.

Therefore another consequence is: beware! We must strengthen these meetings, never displace or substitute the meetings of the Word of God, even if other meetings are also important.

I pray that the Delegates, Coordinators, and Trainers are really the people you chose and are the best you have; who during a prolonged and permanent period are whom you give your trust to energize all the works that come from your communities and who will be accountable to the community, as provided in the Mission from the beginning.

You chose people that were, for a while, leaders of something that is the matrix of all the overall work of the parish. Therefore, friends,

you cannot play with community-elected positions on which depends the vitality of the Church in every hamlet or city.

(3) I ask you to strive for a deep study of Sacred Scripture. Here in the parish there are courses that are convened: Sacred Scripture in the overall process of salvation history. We do not study Scripture like the Protestants who take from here and there and proof-text isolated passages. Fundamentalists do this as they fight over whether the Virgin had eight kids or one. Why would I care about this? Or whether I eat a chicken with or without blood. Lord, who cares!

No! The salvation history of a community that is in the Bible and that culminates in Jesus is normative for us. In these celebrations, everyone unites for the good with those profound values in this struggle to build a better society and a better country.

These studies are promoted in the parish by your brothers: priests and lay brothers. These studies are uniting a profound reflection with real situations in order to act in the local and national events of the country.

(4) Finally, I also ask you to respect diverse charisms in your communities. Musicians are so important, as important as the humble peasant who brings the seats and equipment for the celebration or the humble woman who makes the tortillas; these are also works of the parish. Other charisms that we have discussed are also important.

Precautions

Some temptations that I see are possible in our community. It is possible to focus on the power and authority of an individual or group leader. This is contrary to the mission method we entrusted and learned alongside you, a method where everyone participates and everyone has a voice. Therefore, to focus on the power of individuals or groups would be antidialogical.

Why does Father want to say this?

To break the dialogue—this is what would happen.

The humble older believers in the most Holy Eucharist here have given an example of change that I admire in their old age. I am willing to kiss their feet, because being older they have tolerated the advance of the Gospel and how it is taught with a willing heart and have adapted to the parish renewal. They have abandoned those forms of practice and evangelization that came before, sometimes without wanting to.

Another temptation I see is true fanaticism among some of the best of you that tends to be sectarian and dogmatic. This is the sad example of some Protestant sects. So, in our soul is a popular Catholicism that we cannot dismiss anymore but that we have to purify. Sometimes we have to improve and appreciate it with the Gospel.

The Eucharist, the Quintessence of Christianity

Before we finish, among all things our faith experience happens in the Church through the Eucharist. Since the beginnings of the primitive Church, it is the quintessence of our faith committed to service of the world. It is the celebration of the death and the resurrection of our Lord.

It is not taking bread like you would take a corn cake. It is a process that comes from life, going through these exterior signs and then moving into life. It is a process that does not stop here among us. The Eucharist is like city life, like work in a store, like the struggle for human rights in the parish. The Eucharist is like a well-run organization.

But the values are lived and appear here without any shame. These values of the kingdom are proclaimed; the cup and the bread are lifted up, and Someone (Jesus) who continued these values was crushed. So, my friends, I tell you that this will be the hallmark of those who will be endangered. The essence of the Eucharist has been understood as the quintessence of Christian values: the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord. The profound change of dying to self brings out the new which, in turn, transforms one's humanity.

Consequently, friends, we have never said here "one does not pray" if we have said "it is not enough to pray." And so we said of the Eucharist. It is not enough to come here with meaningless rituals, like taking a corn cake and throwing it in the mouth and going out there to pray the *Magnificat* to find a bull. This is detestable; it is a caricature of the religion. Life is Eucharist. We have said that everything is about linking the Gospel to life.

Conclusion

I wish my friends that at this moment we could reflect on many things. We are about to take a break in our parish work four years after arriving here and entering into this dynamic of the Mission. This is a pause for an honest assessment, when others from the outside will come here and help us evaluate and understand how to

proceed. Now is the time for a reflective pause in order to see things that have been good that we should continue as well as to recognize things that we need to avoid in the future. We are trying to improve the overall work of you all with the help of God through our humble service. Hopefully this Eucharist and this Fiesta have made us think more about our values, motives, and goals.

With these thoughts, my dear brothers and sisters, I would like to put on the altar all that you bring to thanksgiving for these past four years.

(6) *Offertory*

We are going to make a procession of offerings—the godmothers are going over there—and we are going to point out everything that is significant in our lives.

The *Popol Vuh*. "What is that Father?"[10]

It is the Bible of the indigenous people. They also have their own Bible.

Here we are going to read a piece—look, Father Chamba—from the *Popol Vuh*!

Padre Chamba speaks.

Listen to this little book that is very old and was written by the Mayans and the Quiché in the country where the *Pipil* natives from our own country lived.

So says the Bible from that bit of time:

> The bobcat and coyote, the crow and parakeet, these are the four animals that brought the yellow and white corn. They were told to go to Patxil and they were taught the road and like this, they found the community. This was the blood of Patxil and from this was made the blood of man. Like this, the corn entered into the formation of humanity from our parents. And they were so filled with joy, because they had discovered a beautiful land, full of

[10] The *Popul Vuh* (Book of Council) was "probably formulated in the late pre-Classic period (no later than AD 200) and written in the 1550s by Maya noblemen based on a glyphic text and oral tradition. The nobles had been taught by the friars to write the Maya language in European script." *Religion in Latin America: A Documentary History*, ed. Lee M. Penyak and Walter J. Petry (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 5.

> delights. It was abundant in yellow and white ears of corn cobs, abundant in sapodilla, custard apples, plums, tropical fruits, and honey. They had an abundance of delicious food in that land of Patxil.[11]

Fr. Grande continued:

This is what we are celebrating much later today. We are going to offer the Lord all of our life today, our life and our blood, which we represent with the corn.

Presentation of Gifts

(Gifts offered included: the *Popol Vuh*, fringed husks and maize plants, corn cobs, porridge, sugar, ornaments made of the corn plant, bread, wine, and the collection.)

The chorus of Potrero Grande—several of its members were killed today—sing:

"Blessed are you forever, Lord . . .

"Blessed are you forever, Lord!" (2)

Fr. Grande comments:

Here come our Godmothers, who are servants in your community and because of this are queens. They are queens because they serve and because they are humble!

They have no penalty for a third of a load of firewood, in order to serve you, Juan, who is also carrying wood.[12] There is nothing wrong and no shame in getting up at dawn and lighting a candle like the woman in the Bible in order to make tortillas, and you can hear tortillas being made throughout the hamlet.

These little women, well, they are truly queens, because they are Godmothers, because they are servants. They carry the Bible of the indigenous, which is ultimately our process. For this our people live.

[11] This Mayan creation myth was common in preconquest Central America; Rutilio is connecting the indigenous culture of his context to the Festival of Corn and contemporary Christianity.

[12] Often peasants rented rocky ground from large landowners who charged the rent in firewood. One-third of every load they collected (which they cooked with) went to rent for the land.

The Chorus and People Sing the Same Previous Acclamation

Fr. Grande continues:

"Hey Father, how much has this food cost us!" This is the life of the poor. This is the life of the humble, of the little they have to give for food. We saw them yesterday, below. They have removed the corn from the rain! Even if they have only a small, stony piece of ground! This is important! United in community, they have brought down the corn. And this is what we enjoy in our shared brotherhood. Nothing more do we ask of them than that they give a little in order to pay for sugar that they sweat for, even as the price soars into the clouds, like other things. Even as such, they share. They are pronouncing and living values and they are denouncing an unjust world, a world that does not leave even the branch of a tree for birds to sing and live on.

The Chorus and People Sing the Acclamation a Third Time

Fr. Grande continues:

Brothers and sisters, we pray that this which we offer is acceptable to our Lord, who is our Father . . .

The People Answer and Fr. Grande Offers the Prayer in a Prayerful Tone

We present to you, Lord, these offerings, the humble tortilla, hosts from our pueblo; the corn, the sweat of our people in their vital process from the planting until the harvest, from achieving a small harvest even on rocky ground, which they have carried on their own backs.

These gifts, Lord, are offered together with the bread that is you, Bread of Life. We want them to be for us like a provocation, a commitment to sincerely follow in the construction of a more human world, a more fraternal world in which the Cains do not abound, a world where so many brothers are tortured and killed. We want a world where rich people with powerful hearts are not self-sufficient. They are enemies of God because they are enemies of their fellow human beings.

All of this is presented through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our salvation.

We ask you through Him, who lives and reigns today, always and forever.

The Choir Sings: Amen!

— The Lord be with you always!

— If he is with you, lift up your heads and your hearts!

— We give thanks to God.

— It is good and just that we give thanks, Lord and good Father [and the Eucharistic prayer continued].

Aguilares, August 15, 1976
Third Festival of Corn

***** End of Recorded Liturgy *****

Commentary

This liturgy celebrated the Fiesta of Corn and showed the other side of the pastoral range Rutilio embodied in his direct ministry to the rural agricultural communities around Aguilares. Of particular note is his inclusion of the voices of those to whom he ministers. Second, his ability to connect the biblical message to the lived reality of the people is remarkable. Third, he emphasizes themes from the original Missionary Tour and demonstrates a self-critical dimension when he acknowledges real concerns that he has about the direction of community leadership. Finally, we see a glimpse of his very rich theology of the Eucharist as the "quintessence" of Christianity. This theology of the Eucharistic table is perhaps what he is best known for in El Salvador today.

Shortly after Vatican II, while studying at an institute in Brussels, Belgium, Rutilio became convinced that every liturgy must include the participation of as many people "from the base" as possible. By "the base" he meant those people who fill the pews every Sunday but rarely actively participated in much else. It was already clear that

leaders in the communities to which Rutilio ministered emerged from the people who came together to read and interpret Scripture. These Delegates of the Word became the foundation of a liberating pastoral ministry that created new communities of new people. Strong communities become agents of their own change.

In this homily, Rutilio reserved a time in the Liturgy of the Word where people from the community could share what they thought of the gospel reading and its lesson for them that day. This was and continues to be quite common in Latin America, as dialogical homilies were common in communities where people and their pastor have a close relationship. Hearing the people set the stage for Rutilio not only to affirm but also to correct and to push new understandings of the reading that may have been beyond their ability.

Devotion to the Blessed Mother in Latin America was very strong. But like any devotion, it could descend into the superstitious where the original reason for devotion was long lost. North Americans do the same thing when they bury statues of St. Joseph upside down in front of a house in order to sell it—a superstitious abuse of the saints—but common nonetheless. Saints can be reduced to their utility (what they can get or do for us), but Rutilio tried to correct this use of the *Magnificat* as well as devotion to the person of Mary through a deeper reflection on the reasons for her holiness. He was quite direct when he stated that the purpose of Mary and of praying the *Magnificat* is not to find a cow, defend against a curse, or any other possible manipulative use—he called this, in fact, a "caricature of religion." What he gleaned from the prayer of Mary was so much more.

For Rutilio, Mary was a model of generosity, not a vain, glorious queen. She had come to serve her cousin Elizabeth very concretely prior to the conclusion of her pregnancy and it was this service that distinguished her. Mary "collects wood" and "washes clothes" and does so day after day as a form of love and service—just like the prototypical Salvador woman who lived in the rural village. These women, who embody the service and generosity of Mary, are the people Rutilio wanted to highlight in the liturgy. Elsewhere he had described them as bearing the brunt of most of the suffering in Salvadoran society. Thus, Mary "releases her word" as a model of how the world should be—denouncing those who are rich and praising the poor who never seem to have enough. Rutilio transposed that into the liturgy by reading Salvadoran reality through the prism of

Scripture. The rich become those trying to frustrate the just development of more human peasant communities who need land and land reform to survive; the poor are those in front of him who need to find their "word" to "say" a new world. This "word" is not simply about prayer but about action as well.

For Rutilio, Mary was glorified when people in the community emulated her service to others because faith only became real in action—faith was never only an idea. This call to act and not only affirm an intellectual content of belief is critical for the transformation of communities who have never had a "voice." That action must take the form of service and that service must be humble, self-sacrificing, and Gospel centered. Those who focus on the power of individuals or groups within the community negated the dialogical and inclusive model the original Mission was built on. Rutilio clearly demonstrated his disapproval of this tendency.

He reminded the people with four different points of emphasis what this action of faith looked like. First, parents needed to set an example for their children. They had to act in faith and promote the faith—not delegate that task to others—so their children could emulate them. Second, he encouraged them to prioritize the communal Liturgies of the Word led by Delegates (not priests) in order to keep the Gospel front and center while diminishing the potential for an overemphasis on political organization. Third, the study of Scripture and its deep meaning was essential. He exhorted them not to "prooftext" or use Scripture for narrow, self-interested purposes but to get to the deeper and more thorough meaning that required real effort. Finally, he asked them to respect a diversity of gifts and to honor all the people in the community. Elitism was difficult to maintain if everyone was raised up for what he or she contributed to the community. He seemed worried that leadership positions had inflated people's egos and he wanted to curtail that before it happened. All of these points, as well as his message about what was important about Mary and the *Magnificat*, lead to the quintessence of Christianity, the Eucharist.

The epitome and climax of this homily and this liturgy was the Eucharist. The essence of the Eucharist articulated by Rutilio was service on behalf of others. "The essence of the Eucharist has been understood as the quintessence of Christian values: the life, the death, and resurrection of the Lord. The profound change of dying to self

brings out the new which, in turns, transforms one's humanity." This is the meaning of the Eucharist—not some dry, medieval dogma about material change, but rather an imitation of the action of Jesus—an action that transformed the self away from self and toward others and God. Action on behalf of others, even to the point of sacrificing oneself, was the perfect imitation of the Eucharist. Rutilio was fond of saying that the Eucharist was the image of the kingdom of God, and all were welcome at the table of the Lord. A song in El Salvador captures both the words and spirit of the ministry of Rutilio.

Vamos todos al banquete	Let us all go to the banquet,
a la mesa de la creación,	at the table of creation,
cada cual con su taburete	each one on their stool
tiene un puesto y una misión.	has a place and a mission.

For Rutilio the Eucharist was an inclusive meal where everyone was welcome. Everyone had gifts and everyone was called to evangelize, without exception. This inclusive meal that epitomized the love and inclusion of God was the blueprint for a new society.

At the conclusion of this liturgy we are left with a powerful message of resistance, action, and inclusion only seven months before Rutilio was assassinated. Mary and her prayer have been held up, not as pious sentiments of a passive people, but as an active call to use one's voice to subvert the social order and work for the kingdom of God. This work occurs through service and self-sacrifice, both of which are embodied perfectly in the Eucharist. So ends the third Festival of Corn, as Rutilio entered into the final months of his life working on behalf of the poor, those for whom he would make the ultimate sacrifice.

Questions for Discussion

(1) How is Rutilio's understanding and presentation of Mary, as well as the *Magnificat*, different from how you learned about it? Is this important?

(2) What is the relationship between "faith" and "action"? Is faith only faith through action? Can they be separated? What do most of us mean by an "action of faith" in *our* context?

(3) What did you think about homilies that included the participation of people in the pews? Would you participate in a homily conversation if you were invited?

(4) How does the Church of North America embody a self-critical element in the way that Rutilio did through his homily? Is this important for a Church?

CHAPTER SIX

The Violence of Love: Rutilio Grande, SJ, and the Final Homily at Apopa

Historical Context

Accusations against the organizing and ministry of the Catholic Church in general, and priests working with rural agricultural communities in particular, grew in El Salvador and specifically targeted Rutilio. This began with leaflets in the Aguilares area published by the "Conservative Religious Front," dated July 17, 1975. They accused Rutilio and other members of his Missionary Team, including priests, of being agitators and haters who encouraged class warfare. According to the leaflet, they had "thrown in the trash" both their faith in God and love of God. Rutilio responded to these leaflets and tried to clarify—again—his situation and his activities. The leaflets actually gave him the opportunity to proclaim the fundamental principles of the one and true Jesus, very different from the Jesus worshipped by the conservative Catholics who authored the leaflets.[1] For Rutilio, the Jesus of the Conservative Religious Front was a mute Jesus who had no prophetic voice for justice.

In Rutilio's final homily given in the village of Apopa in February 1977, one can sense the culmination of the conflict over land reform as well as the heightening of tension with wealthy landowners and the government. The background to this homily was the expulsion

[1] Rodolfo Cardenal, *Historia de una Esperanza: Vida de Rutilio Grande* (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 2002), 462.

of the Colombian priest Fr. Mario Bernal. Prior to his expulsion, violence from rightwing groups and leftwing organizations began to increase. Mario Bernal was expelled from El Salvador after five years of ministry in Apopa. Bernal had a weekly radio program on *Radio Vanguardia*, which the government disliked. Rutilio gave the following homily in protest of Bernal's arbitrary expulsion as well as a Christian testimony on behalf of the vicariate of Quezaltepeque in response to this action. "Father Mario Bernal, pastor of the neighboring parish of Apopa, was expelled from the country on January 29, 1977. Catholics from other parishes joined the Apopa community for Mass on February 13, and Grande preached the homily."[2] This liturgy and the following homily occurred almost exactly a month before Rutilio Grande, SJ, was assassinated on March 12, 1977.

Homily at Apopa, February 13, 1977[3]

Rutilio Grande, SJ

Preambles and Clarification

Dear Brothers, Sisters, and Friends:

The invitation for this liturgy has been shared throughout the valley, in villages and hamlets where the voice of our beloved Fr. Bernal was heard through the airwaves with his classic "do you agree!?" while he preached the Bible.

I want to say that this invitation was directed to the Christian parish communities of Guazapa, Nejapa, Quezaltepeque, Opico, Ciudad Arce, Aguilares, and Tacachico. Our vicar has said that these are the parishes to the north of La Libertad and of San Salvador.

We meet here about the emergency of the priests and we agreed with the awareness of the faithful in our parishes to have this demonstration of faith. It was very clear that we met at the gas station

[2] Douglas Marcouiller, "Archbishop with an Attitude: Oscar Romero's *Sentir con la Iglesia*," *Studies in the Spirituality of the Jesuits* 35, no. 3 (May 2003): 21.

[3] Rutilio Grande, "Homilía de Apopa," in *XXV Aniversario de Rutilio Grande. Sus Homilías*, ed. Salvador Carranza, Miguel Cavada Diez, and Jon Sobrino (San Salvador: Centro Monseñor Romero, UCA, 2007), 73–86.

and departed from there in an organized manner, all together, in solidarity, confessing our faith. We concluded with the Eucharist, which is our most important commitment and the symbol of what Fr. Mario Bernal preached and defended.

The Eucharist is the symbol of a shared table, with a stool for each person and tablecloths long enough for everyone. It is the symbol of Creation that requires redemption. It is already being sealed with martyrdom!

Concrete slogans of discipline have been given. Every sheet of information that has been shared is not our responsibility. The official statement of the Christian communities will be given in this Mass up to communion. All of the other sheets will be good or bad according to their content. But it does not fall under the responsibility of our vicariate. It will be good or bad according to its content.[4]

We also planned the four stops along the way of our march, in which four of our brothers were sent to take the word of God out to confront our reality, echoing the same reality of our people. This was also intended!

Introduction

Church, Institution of Service

Now, my dear brothers and sisters, friends, allow me to say a few things to you, after we have heard the Good News of the Word of God in this reading from the gospel. We are part of the Church formed by laypeople—the majority of the people of God are you all. And if we are perched here in the bleachers, our ministry has no purpose without the function of your ministry. Ministry comes from the verb "to minister," which means to serve the people of God. From the pope, through the bishops, to the last village priest, we are servants within the community, which is the people of God.

The Church is surely an institution. This institution is required to have good motives and to be a faithful bearer of Gospel values. Its purpose is to boost the world dynamically by fermenting it, as bread dough is fermented with yeast activating its rise.

[4] This seems to be a reference to a variety of political groups involved in the March and Mass, but Rutilio does not take responsibility for their messages; he will deliver the Church's message in the context of the liturgy.

Incarnated in the Fragility of History

The Church should not be a museum of dead traditions or of undertakers. It extends throughout all nations, languages, races, and diverse cultures of the world, in the concrete histories of those who live in communities. We are not speaking in Japan but here in our country, and the Word of God should be incarnated here in El Salvador.

We are aware of our fragility, of our sins and betrayals on the long road of history. We are a human corporation, the human element of the Church on the level of laypeople, on the level of directors, priests, and bishops, and popes. We have confessed our faults and this is the daily requirement of the personal and corporate conversion of the Church. The pope has given an example of this on various occasions. Arriving in Jerusalem he lay down on the soil and recognized his fault and the fault of the Church in the many sins that the world suffers.[5] The pope is a weak and sinful man; we are weak and sinful people. It says so here in the reading where it pauses: Where are we going to announce what the Lord has given us if we are poor!?

Conclusion: We are *not* here in Apopa this morning, with all the parish communities represented here, like an unintegrated sect or part of the Church, disconnected from the local Church or disconnected from the Universal Church. We feel ourselves deeply a part of this Church that we love. We always want to see it reformed through the power of the Holy Spirit, in the midst of weaknesses that it has, in the midst of evil, in the midst of the problems in the world. We understand the necessity of continual conversion if we want the Church to fulfill what it should be.

Part One: Equality of the Children of God

My dear friends, before we arrive at the central reason that occupies us in this Eucharist, allow me a second step in the reflection. Here the Fr. has read to us the gospel.

The gospel that we just heard is transparent and clean, like the water that comes down from the mountain. Only the blind cannot understand it!

Jesus was a pilgrim walking among his people. He went through towns and villages. He taught the Good News of the kingdom of God

[5] This is referring to the trip by Paul VI to Jerusalem in January 1964.

in each hamlet, in every place, and at every crossroad. And "What are the guidelines of this kingdom of God, his primary message?" They are well defined, very clear, and very precise. It is evil and it is from blindness that others do not understand it!

All people have a common Father. We are all children of such a Father, even though we are born of the womb of distinct mothers here on earth. All people are brothers and sisters. Everyone is equal one with the other! But Cain was a negation of the Plan of God, and groups of Cains exist here in El Salvador. Here in this country groups of Cains exist and they invoke God, which is even worse!

In his plan for us, God gave us the material world. Like this material Mass, with material bread and the material cup that we raise in celebration of Christ, the Lord. The material world is for everyone, without exception. This is what Genesis says.

This is no argument when someone says, "I bought half of El Salvador with my money, so I have the right to all of it and there is no right for discussion!" It is a purchased right, because I have the right to buy half of El Salvador. This is a negation of God! There is no right that is worth more than the majority!

So the material world is for everyone, without borders. Like a common table with tablecloths long enough for everyone, like the Eucharist. Each person has his or her own stool. So everyone comes to the table with the tablecloth and everyone brings something of his- or herself.

For some reason Christ wanted to signify the kingdom in and through a supper. He spoke often of a banquet, of a dinner. And he celebrated this on the eve of his total commitment. He, of thirty-three years, celebrated a farewell dinner with his most intimate friends. And he said that this was the great memorial of the Redemption. A table shared in fellowship, where everyone has a position and a place.

Love is the signal of the kingdom! It is the only keyword that summarizes all the ethical codes of humanity and is sublimated and held in Jesus. It is the Love of shared fellowship that breaks down and checks all classes of barriers and prejudice and has overcome hate. We are not here in order to hate! Even these "Cains," we love them. They are our enemies—evidently they don't understand!

The Christian has no enemies. These "Cains" are our brothers. We don't hate anyone. Love is conflictive and requires *moral violence* of believers and the Church as a body. I have not said physical violence. Moral violence! I say this for the tape recorder, because I saw along

the way some writers who are not of the faithful, who heard Father Mario, and who are traitors of the Word of God (interrupted by applause).[6]

Better, let us not applaud, so we will not stop!

In the pursuit of justice, we can expect to encounter discord and opposition; and in such cases, conflict is sometimes unavoidable. Yet love does not allow us to stand on the sidelines of such conflicts; it commands engagement. In such situations, we do not advocate physical violence. Instead, we should engage in the struggle by employing the moral force of the power of love. Therefore, the code is in one word, LOVE: against all anti-love, against sin, against injustice, against the domination of peoples, against the destruction of fellowship.[7]

The message of Jesus not only announces the kingdom and denounces the anti-kingdom. The gospel that we have heard, word for word, says: "he saw the people and felt compassion for them because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd."

The message of Jesus—"no one has spoken like this man"—makes available to people, in addition to his prophetic word, the full capacity of his person. It makes available his journey, his qualities and talents, and his power as a miracle worker: "He healed all kinds of diseases and ailments," said the reader of the Word of God.

The Word of God says that the Lord is not indifferent to human suffering. In any manner! The Lord gave and multiplied the bread. It is said his word was his action as it is understood in the Bible: The word is action. Action is the same as the Word of the Father. He never stopped on the road, he was always moving.

My friends, as a Church Body, the Church and each one of us who make it up are prophets, just like the brothers who preached with truth on the way of the procession that we had. As an ecclesial body we are continuers of the mission of Jesus Christ. This body that is the Church and that includes entire communities has a mission. This mission is like homework, to announce and make possible a favorable environment for the kingdom of God here in this world. This body

[6] Rutilio recognized those from outside the community recording his homily; he thought they were hostile to his ministry and work.

[7] I would like to thank Daniel Diliberti for assistance in interpreting and translating this very difficult paragraph.

must embody the values of the kingdom of God in the realities of our country in order to transform it effectively, like yeast that transforms dough.

The characteristic of the Mission, as our brother has already told us at the beginning of the procession, is demanding: "I sent you." And Jesus says to the Church and He says it to each one of us: "Go and tell the people." And the people are composed of many diverse groups. And the prophet has to confront them with the Word of God in his hand! This is a divine reality.

The message of God is like a thermometer to measure human realities. This message of God is a requirement for these realities in which many distinct groups in our country are involved. There are the "Cains," and there are those who are "Abels," those who are martyred, those who are enslaved. We all have a prophetic mission.

Part Two: The Risk of Living the Gospel

But, what fact brings us here together today? Why are we here in Apopa sunning ourselves? You brothers and sisters are sunning yourselves; we are very comfortable here in the shade!

The reason we gather together today in Apopa, from all the corners of the Vicariate, with other communities from outside the boundaries of our Vicariate, is the case of Fr. Mario. It is an ecclesial event. The Church cannot remain silent. It cannot stay off on the side and ignore this act. We are all affected.

We heard in the village: what are you going to do? The common people, the humble people have said to us there in the hamlets—those who heard Fr. Mario over the airwaves—"what are you going to do?"

Well, we are here! At the least in order to give this symbol of official protest of the Church, of our communities, of this part of the Church of the Archdiocese. He was a priest of the local Church of San Salvador. He was concretely here in the parish of Apopa on a mission of the Church in this community.

Surprisingly, he has been violently expelled due to a chain of events without any accusation proven at trial and without the opportunity to defend himself. This occurred against all the human rights guaranteed by all the civilized nations of the earth. And sadly this happened in my country. If Fr. Mario had committed a criminal act, well, then they should judge him and tell us the verdict publically. They even made a public show and trial on the night of Holy Thursday

and Holy Friday for Jesus of Nazareth. This was not even allowed for poor Fr. Mario.

They said to me that he was an alien! Why was Fr. Mario an alien? He certainly was, and is, of Latin America. I wonder if we are foreigners if, in Latin America, which was discovered by Columbus, we are all mixed brown and white with blood in the same way! Are we strangers in some part of us?

Fr. Bernal is from Colombia. Many speak of the Hispanic nature of the twelfth of October, raise little flags that many children applaud with their teachers! The day of Hispanic identity, the day of Latin America. What is this!?

He, a foreigner!? But this isn't the problem!

What is at stake here is the fundamental question of what it means to be Christian today. What is at stake here is what it means to be a priest today in our country and on the continent that is suffering the hour of the martyr. The challenge is to be or not to be faithful to the mission of Jesus in the midst of this concrete world that we live in, in this country. If you are a poor priest or a poor catechist in this country from our community, you are slandered, threatened, taken out secretly in the night, and it is possible they will bomb you. It has happened! If you are a foreigner they will take you out! They have removed many foreigners! But the fundamental question still remains.

It is dangerous to be a Christian in our environment! It is dangerous to be truly Catholic! It is practically illegal to be Christian in our environment, in our country. This is so because the world around us is founded on a radically established *disorder* to which the mere proclamation of the Gospel is subversive. And this is how you have to be, you can't be different! *We are chained to a disorder, not an order*!

Practically speaking, the priest and the authentic Christian who put into practice their faith according to the plain and simple lines of the message of Jesus have to live between two poles demanding loyalty: the revealed Word of God and the people. The usual human existence is that of the great majorities who are the marginal on the road—the crying, the sick, the enslaved, the one outside the culture. Sixty percent of them are illiterate and they have lived in a feudal system for centuries.

In certain places in our country, there are no owners of land or of life. The poor and marginalized have to climb up into fruit trees—and

not even these are theirs—not even the fruit trees! The little birds can fly and get up there where they nest in the branches. The poor Salvadoran is a slave of this land, which is from God, according to the Bible. The Salvadoran is poor! The statistics of our small country are dreadful.

We also said that in this country there exists a false democracy, a democracy in name only. There has been a lot of lip about this; mouths have been full of "democracy." The power of the people is the power of a minority, not of the entire people! They deceive us!

The statistics of our small country are dreadful on the level of health, the level of education, the level of criminality, the level of subsistence living of the majorities, on the inequality of land ownership. It is all bundled up with a false hypocrisy and lavish works.

Woe to you, hypocrites, who call yourselves Catholics but inside are full of filth and evil! You Cains crucify the Lord who walks with the name of Manuel, with the name of Luis, with the name of Chabela, with the name of the humble worker in the field!

"Our people hunger for the True God and hunger for bread" was rightly said in our archdiocesan pastoral week. So, no privileged minority in our country has a Christian reason for being, except to work for the large majority that makes up the Salvadoran people.

Neither religious minorities nor elites aware of our Christianity exist as Christians when they maintain injustice. This includes both secular leaders, ministers, and the minorities who hold political, economic, or social power. They have no Christian existence unless it is one dedicated to serving other people!

Part Three: Persecuted, like Jesus of Nazareth

Returning to the case of Fr. Mario—those who knew him here in Apopa and elsewhere can say he was a good and authentic man. We heard this in our priestly meetings of the Vicariate. It was clear and clean like the message of Jesus. He fully fulfilled the ministry of a priest within the constraints of the ministerial priesthood in the Church. He did not overshoot these functions. He was not a guerilla; he did not work for any organized political group.

Yes, this is how he taught the word of the Lord, clean and simple, with his usual cordiality. And he tried to animate and make dynamic the various groups of his parish with Gospel values.

He did not want the people of his parish to be simple followers of dead traditions. He did not want his people dedicated to insignificant things buried from one year to another, like images carved in wood. He wanted true worshippers of the living God, followers of the Lord who are present to each one of his brothers and sisters whom they pass on the street of Apopa, in the market, at work, on the bus, at the plant, from the village.

He did not want the full feast days celebrated each year, like the ones that just passed. He refused it, but like a prophet with gentleness and firmness! He did not want this parish to round up the poor women who are brought from there with their sashes and paraded around for the full festivities, as they have been here.

He said: St. Catherine of Apopa should not be honored in this hypocritical and stupid way.

If Jesus of Nazareth, brothers and sisters, saw these things, he would say: "this is what I did." Fr. Mario also has.

Some findings on the case of Fr. Mario:

I am afraid, my brothers and sisters, that very quickly the Bible and the Gospel will not be allowed to enter through our borders. The bindings of the book will no longer be allowed because all of its pages are subversive! Subversive against sin, naturally!

I call attention to the avalanche of imported religious sects and of the slogans of freedom of worship, in this context, as they walk and cry out in the street over there. Freedom of worship, freedom of worship! Freedom of worship in order to bring us a false god! Freedom of worship in order to bring us a god that is in the clouds, sitting in a hammock. Freedom of worship in order to present to us a Christ that is not truly Christ. It is false and it is serious.

I am afraid, my brothers and sisters, that if Jesus of Nazareth returned, at this time, coming down from Galilee to Judea, as if to say, from Chalatenango to San Salvador, I daresay that he would not arrive in Apopa, at this moment, with his preaching and actions. I think they would detain him there, at the top of the Guazapa volcano. There they would arrest him and put him in jail (*at this moment the light goes out and the microphone fails to work*).

Do not worry! There is another thing around here so that the voice resonates to the mountains. (*Great applause as he proceeds with a megaphone*.)

So, my dear brothers and sisters, I am afraid that if Jesus entered through the border there near Chalatenango, they would not let him pass![8] Over there, by Guazapa, they would detain him. Who knows if he would arrive in Apopa, right? Better said, if he arrived at Guazapa he would be brought before the Supreme Court and declared unconstitutional and subversive.

The God-Man, the prototypical human being, was accused of rebellion, of being a foreign Jew, of intrigues through exotic and strange ideas, contrary to "democracy" as it is said, contrary to the minority. These ideas are contrary to God, because the accusers are from the tribe of Cain.

Surely, brothers and sisters, they will return to crucify him. And I hope that God frees me from also being in the group of those crucifiers! Without a doubt, brothers and sisters, they will return to crucify him again because we prefer a Christ of undertakers and morticians.

Many people prefer a Christ of undertakers and morticians. They want a mute Christ, without a mouth, who passes by them walking in the streets. Many prefer a Christ with a muzzle on his mouth. Many prefer a Christ made for our own whims and who acts according to our own interests.

This is not the Christ of the Gospel! This is not the young Christ, of thirty-three years, who gave his life for the noblest cause of humanity!

My brothers and sisters, some want a god of the clouds. They don't want this Jesus of Nazareth, who is a scandal for the Jews and madness for the pagans. They want a god who will not challenge them, one who will leave those in the establishment peaceful and one who will *not* say these tremendous words: "Cain, what have you done to your brother, Abel?"

Do not take anyone's life. Do not put your foot on the neck of any person, dominating him or her, humiliating him or her. In Christianity one must be willing to give his or her life in service for a just order, in order to save others, for the values of the Gospel.

My dear brothers and sisters, if you read in the press our humble archbishop—who will soon leave being archbishop—our humble

[8] There is a border post with Honduras in the province of Chalatenango in the northwest part of the country. Both the Chalatenango and Morazán Provinces, or "Departments," as they are called in El Salvador, were centers of antigovernment resistance during the civil war (1980–1992).

archbishop, who like our priests, has his weaknesses and faults. Yesterday he was attacked very roughly by a group of Cains who called themselves Catholics. He was called a "communist" publically by a stubbornly defiant minority because of his authentic pastoral letters based on the gospels.

There have been public attacks in our newspapers with amazing effrontery. There have been public attacks in the newspapers of the country against the documents of the Church, such as those from Vatican II. Paul VI also has been attacked by international high finance circles of the Empire: The *Wall Street Journal*—there, up there—you know, right?

They condemned him saying that he defended a "warmed over Marxism" in his famous encyclical *On the Development of Peoples*. This is the scandal that always accompanies the announcement of the Gospel, and in a special way, the practice of the Gospel.

Fr. Mario Bernal—he is now far from us! We have learned that they returned you to Colombia through Guatemala, through the persecutors who form a chain through every nation. Your power, Fr. Mario, was the Gospel, and at the same time it was your weakness. Like us, our power does not reside in weapons or in armies or in a rifle or even in legions of angels, as Jesus said to Pilate.

Mario, you have triumphed in your weakness! And your enemies, who are enemies of the Gospel, have been defeated. They are irrational, and through their irrationality they want to hide the truth from the light, which you cannot cover with a finger or with brute force.

Your voice, Mario, will resonate in the rivers and the mountains of our villages and hamlets. Your exile serves to unite the martyrdom of the Church in various countries of Latin America.

Last year a young priest, a Colombian like you, Fr. Ivan, died brutally when he was murdered with another North American priest and a group of peasants by landowners in Olancho, Honduras. They buried them fifteen meters deep in a well with a tractor.

Not many years ago, maybe six years ago, another Colombian, Fr. Hector Gallego, was captured in the night in his shack in Santa Fe de Veraguas, Panama. No one ever heard from him again. They threw him in the ocean at night. He helped peasants in a cooperative, in a network of cooperatives. He helped that community put into practice the Gospel.

In a similar way, they just killed a Salesian priest and a Jesuit priest in Brazil who were defending the Indians. And in Paraguay, various

priests have been banished by an irrational dictator. And the list continues. . . .

And here, among us, the list grows of those who are being expelled from our country. A few days ago, Ramirez, one of our brothers—Juan Jose Ramirez is the exact name—has just been run over. But they have not expelled him because he is healing from his wounds! He is healing for being a defender of the humble and of the poor.

Dear Mario, when Pope Paul VI went to your land he descended to the ground and kissed the earth of Colombia, which is also our land. It was 1968. And he spoke from your land of Colombia to all the peasants of Latin America on August 23, 1968. He spoke before the evening when all the bishops of the continent got together and proclaimed "freedom for the children of God and in a special way for the oppressed of the continent."

These are the words of the pope, Mario, which you could say if you were here! You yourself said them in one form or another and they threw you out of the country. The pope addressed the peasants with special language (*read a long citation from the pope*):

> We love you with a preferential love. Remember this well and keep that in mind always. The Holy Mother Catholic Church loves you, despite its sins and weaknesses. We know the conditions of your existence, conditions of misery for many of you, sometimes below the normal requirement needed for the life of a person.
>
> Now you are listening in silence, dear peasants, but we hear the cry that rises from your suffering to most of humanity. We cannot be disinterested in you. We want to be in solidarity with your cause, which is of a humble people, that of an authentic people.
>
> We know that economic development has been unequal in the great continent of Latin America. While it has favored those who have promoted it in principle, it has neglected the masses of native peoples who are nearly always abandoned to an ignoble level of life and at times maltreated and exploited.
>
> We know that today my peasant brothers and sisters. We realize the inferiority of your social and cultural conditions and that you are eager to achieve a fairer distribution of goods. We know you deserve better recognition of your importance for being so numerous on the continent and the role you play in society.

> While we believe that you have some knowledge of how the Catholic Church, despite its weaknesses, has defended your situation—for example, the popes have defended your ancestors with its social encyclicals. The Church has defended you through Vatican II—composed of three thousand bishops—and We Ourself, the Pope, have sponsored your cause in the Encyclical *On the Development of Peoples*.
>
> But today, my dear peasants—continued the pope—the problem has worsened because you have become aware of your needs and your suffering. Like many in the world today, you cannot tolerate, endure, or bear that these conditions should always be endured without seeking a remedy!

This is what the pope said, Fr. Mario! This is what you said on the radio. This is what the documents of the Church say. This is what the Church of El Salvador is saying. It is a disgrace that this is not lawful; it is a disgrace that this is illegal to say.

Fr. Mario. These communities, that of Apopa and the belt of Christian communities of the vicariate which surround it, and the brothers and sisters who have come from other parts of our country, from the local Church, we are going to celebrate this Eucharist, which is the ideal that sustains us.

At this celebration, there are long tablecloths, a common table for all, and stools for everyone. And Christ in the middle of it all! He took the life of nobody but offered his life for a more noble cause.

This is what he said: Raise your glass in a toast of love for me! Recalling my memory, engaging in the building of the kingdom! The building of the kingdom is the fellowship of a shared table, the Eucharist.

I hope that we say: Mario agrees! Let this be the injunction in this Eucharist, as your commentaries on the radio were saying about the Gospel.

Do you agree? I agree!

Are we in agreement? (He asks, lifting the New Testament in his hand).

We agree!—chants everyone raising their hands.

Good, and as we agree, let us recite the Creed with our Church, which is one in agreement with Fr. Mario, over there in Bogota, where he was thrown. And so we enter into the movement of the Holy Spirit celebrating this Eucharist.

I believe in God, the Father . . .

Apopa, February 13, 1977

[Ten days later, Oscar Romero was named archbishop of San Salvador. One month later—March 12, 1977—Rutilio Grande, SJ, was murdered with two peasants on the road from Aguilares to his hometown, El Paisnal.]

***** End of Homily *****

Commentary

This final homily of Rutilio Grande, SJ, tied together many of the themes from his ministry embodied over the last seven years of his life. The theological thread that structured this homily was the Eucharist as a social symbol. This symbol gave form to an ecclesiology of servant leadership that worked concretely for the kingdom of God through how human beings ordered the world. The three parts of this homily, "equality before God," "risk of living the Gospel," and "persecuted like Jesus," are a *tour de force* of social symbolism, the role of martyrdom, and a Christology of "challenge." On so many levels there are lessons here for the Church of North America.

Liturgy and social protest go together if sacramental theology is related to the kingdom of God and reflects how one lives or tries to live in the world. The Eucharist is not celebrated only to achieve personal holiness. It is celebrated to remember the servant-love of Jesus of Nazareth and reorder the world so that it resembles a meal with a place for everyone. For Rutilio, the Eucharist was "the symbol of a shared table, with a stool for each person and tablecloths long enough for everyone." This symbol of inclusion, affirmation, and equality reflected his vision for the world. The Church, and its role in the world, was to perpetuate action where these values became real. This is what he meant by "Gospel values." Thus, the purpose of the Church was "to boost the world dynamically, fermenting it, as bread dough is fermented with yeast, activating its rise." This "boosting" began with servant leadership at all levels. It began with the recognition that the majority Church was the people of God, i.e., laypeople. This led to the understanding of ordained ministry as service to the people of God. And this wasn't just rhetoric. Rutilio

used to stay in people's homes and eat what they ate when he visited poor rural communities. It was common pastoral practice of the Church at this time for a visiting priest to receive the best food a community could offer and then usually eat by himself or with the political leadership of a particular community. Rutilio, conversely, disdained honorific titles, special food, or special treatment; he even joked once that poor rural farmers should not give chickens to "fat priests" because meat was consumed only on special occasions, which were rare.

Rutilio was aware that the work of the Church occurred in a particular context and needed to be present to that context. The Church was "incarnational" insofar as it was in and part of the world. Of course whether the Church enters into the messiness of reality is a choice, something he wanted the Church to do. This understanding of Church reflected Rutilio's Christology. God is not "way up there in the clouds" and neither should the Church be. One of his favorite sayings was "the Gospel has to grow feet." He was also deeply aware of the faults and sins of the Church and, therefore, called for the ongoing conversion of the institution. Far from triumphalist, Rutilio's understanding of the Church was of the humble servant-leader variety, one that acknowledged limits to any single leader and the constant need for the Holy Spirit.

The radical message this servant Church had for El Salvador was first a message of equality. "We are all children of a common Father, even though we are born of the womb of distinct mothers here on earth." If people took that seriously, then some would not take from the need of others, or as he put it, "The material world is for everyone, without exception." When people hoarded more than they needed, this went against the kingdom because it created inequality. This confrontation with the anti-kingdom, with the creation of that inequality, was inevitable if the Church promoted the kingdom. But the confrontation was nonviolent, or put differently, it happened through the "violence" of love. Rutilio constantly said that "our violence is not that of the machete," but rather the confrontation between the kingdom and anti-kingdom is caused by love, which will generate conflict.

This was why Jesus was killed—not for simply spreading a message of love but for confronting those who refused to love and naming that for what it was—selfishness, egoism, hatred, discrimination. In this way love was a moral force that struggled against injustice of

every kind. This moral force took the form of announcing the kingdom and denouncing the anti-kingdom. Rutilio often incorporated the moral force of this love in the liturgy through the homily, the music, and the prayers of the faithful.

The moral force of love does not go unnoticed, especially among those toward whom it was directed, and thus he spoke of the risk of living the Gospel. While so many laypeople, priests, and bishops throughout El Salvador and Latin America would die after Rutilio was assassinated in 1977, he was aware of those who had been persecuted before his death. The history of the martyrs and persecuted he listed, including Fr. Bernal, whose expulsion was the occasion for this liturgy, was proof that it was dangerous to be Christian. If the Gospel offered a way for the world to be what it ought to be (ordered according to God's plan), the world represented the opposite (disorder). Thus Rutilio exclaimed "the world around us is founded on a radically established *disorder*, to which the mere proclamation of the Gospel is subversive." There was risk because the message itself was countercultural, and there was additional risk because of the concentration of power and wealth in a small number of people, those he referred to as the "minority." Democracy was a sham when people were manipulated or denied the right to exercise their voice. Rutilio's strongest words were reserved for those Catholics in positions of power and authority who failed to challenge the disorder of their own country: "Woe to you hypocrites. . . ."

In both the Gospel message of equality (in a very unequal society) as well as the risk of delivering that message, the prophetic servant Church imitated the Jesus it remembered and celebrated in the Eucharist. For Rutilio, Fr. Bernal and his ministry embodied a Church engaged with the world, the problems of the world, and the brokenness around it. Rutilio was not interested in "dead traditions," a spirituality that takes us away from the needs of others around us. He dedicated himself to the Jesus present in people he encountered every day. But an engaged Church was, while always being nonviolent, conflictual. By imitating the actions of Jesus, the Church drew a similar response of persecution upon itself. To emphasize the similarity between Jesus and the Church, Rutilio declared that if Jesus came into El Salvador, he would again be persecuted because Gospel values were threatening to a world of inequality, suffering, and poverty. The choice then became, which Jesus did people believe in?

As a teacher who has taught Christology for the past seventeen years, I am constantly amazed at what students arrive at the university with in terms of knowledge, preferences, and perspectives. When I introduce the christological maxim that Jesus Christ was fully human, fully divine, and one person, there is little reaction. When I ask for comments on the humanity of Jesus, there is usually silence. When I ask for comments on the divinity of Jesus, hands go up. The "divinity" is always framed in terms of miracles or violations of the laws of nature. So what does that tell me? On the whole, my students have no knowledge or understanding that Jesus was a human being who engaged the social reality of first-century Palestine in very concrete ways. All statements about him are usually traceable to the third- or fourth-century creeds, where the humanity of Christ is not emphasized. As a result, Christ is abstract, "up there," and distant. When Christ is separated from Jesus, the incarnation is separated from human history, and an abstract Christ can become anything we desire.

Rutilio recognized this mutation of Christ in those communities that wanted "a Christ without a mouth." A "mute" Christ never challenges our power, privilege, or position. Religious action remains centered on religious ritual and the "otherness" of spirituality. This otherness is aptly referred to as a "Christ of undertakers and morticians." A Christ of the *next life* who will welcome someone into heaven is the Christ of someone who has given up on changing this world. A mute Christ is the "savior" of people who believe that this world cannot be changed or are unwilling to make the sacrifices to do so. When the kingdom of God becomes heaven the world takes on much less importance. When the kingdom of God is *now but not yet* as Vatican II taught, the Church becomes a servant of the world.

Questions for Discussion

(1) How did you react to the Eucharist as a social symbol? Should sacraments have social dimensions?

(2) Do you know anyone in your context who takes a "risk" in living out the Gospel? What might that look like?

(3) How does social reality in your context compare with the kingdom of God if such a kingdom assumes equality of people and the full development of each person and all people?

(4) How can churches work more concretely for the kingdom of God in your context?

CHAPTER SEVEN

"Let Us Embrace This Precious Inheritance": Homily of Archbishop Romero at the Funeral of Rutilio Grande, SJ

Historical Context

Throughout the first and second stages of evangelization in Aguilares, land and land reform continued to be at the center of local and national politics. Recall that because Rutilio embraced the pastoral liberation method, his focus was on community *faith* formation, not political organization. Of course this faith and its formation would have social and political consequences, but that would come after leaders were trained and the community was united.

In the 1970s, in the area around Aguilares, a group named the Landowner Organization against Land Reform (FARO) formed. This organization represented landowners in the area and worked militantly against any organizing done by the Federation of Christian Peasants (FECCAS). According to their literature, FARO existed to resist land reform, especially the reform passed by the National Assembly of El Salvador in the summer of 1976. As the various factions and organizations coalesced either for or against land reform in El Salvador—and there were many—the Church found itself caught in the middle. For example, when various groups marched in the thousands through San Salvador in favor of land reform or opposed to land reform, they would often request a Mass to conclude their demonstrations at the national cathedral. Archbishop Chavez asked that priests not concelebrate at these Masses and thereby not

take explicit sides with organizations at the center of the debate. This was difficult for many priests who had actively worked for land reform through support of the intermediary organizations encouraged by the bishops (including Chavez) at the 1968 Medellín conference.

At various priest senate meetings of the diocese of San Salvador in 1976, Rutilio argued that the bishops could not stand off to the side on this very important issue confronting their people.[1] "You have to be blind not to realize the urgency for peasants in different parts of the country. This urgency continues to grow in a progressive awareness by force of circumstance. The government itself is faced with a severe challenge with these events—just read the speeches of President Molina. He has said things as a result of pressure from the masses, like it or not."[2]

Rutilio defended the goodness and necessity of intermediary organizations such as peasant unions (called for at Medellín) and urged the archdiocese to take the problem seriously. He encouraged the Church to contribute its support to the challenge of land reform. Archbishop Chavez agreed that the fundamental rights of these organizations coincided fully with Gospel values. Further, they were consistent with the conclusions of the 1974 synod of bishops at the Vatican, where Paul VI released his groundbreaking work on evangelization titled *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Proclaiming the Gospel in Our Time).

Rutilio went on to share, in front of his fellow priests, his own experience of conflict related to land and his mission work in Aguilares. "He knew well the risks and failures of an authentic evangelization."[3] Through the Jesuit University of Central America, the Church did support the first phase of land reform. As a result, the Church was vigorously attacked by both the right and left. It was attacked by the right for supporting any land reform, and it was attacked by the left for supporting too moderate a vision of land reform.

[1] The Priest Senate was a body of priests who represented the opinions and values of the priests ministering in the archdiocese. Foreign priests were allowed to represent as well if they lived and worked in the archdiocese. President Molina was president of El Salvador from 1972 to 1977.

[2] Rodolfo Cardenal, *Historia de una Esperanza: Vida de Rutilio Grande* (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 2002), 513.

[3] Cardenal, *Historia de una Esperanza*, 513.

The growth of the Christian peasant union (FECCAS) in the parish was not merely quantitative; it also indicated a qualitative growth in organizational capacity.[4] By November 1975, FECCAS was firmly established in nearly all the villages surrounding Suchitoto, Aguilares, and El Paisnal. The zones of very poor peasant farmers and small landholders were fertile ground for the organization. When there was opposition in a particular community to the labor organizing of FECCAS, the rich would line up against the organization and the poor would join it. The greatest number of affiliates, bases, and mobilizations of workers related to FECCAS were located in and around Aguilares. They were well organized, strategically structured, and widespread throughout the area. The main problem was that "according to the constitution in force, these organizations were banned."[5] The response to such illegal activity would come largely at the hands of a group known as the Paramilitary Force of the Salvadoran Government and Landowners (ORDEN) through people being kidnapped, tortured, and killed.

According to Rodolfo Cardenal, ORDEN was essentially an internal espionage agency of the Salvadoran government with a network of agents throughout the villages of the country. In addition to spying, it promoted small community development projects and made access to health and education services easier for its members to use. During electoral periods, ORDEN became a paramilitary organization for the official government party with the goal of intimidating local peasants. Faced with the expansion of FECCAS in Aguilares, ORDEN strengthened its bases there. According to a communiqué to its members in Aguilares, members (who numbered about thirty) were ordered to observe and try to infiltrate meetings of FECCAS, which were condemned as "totally communist."[6] The members were advised to stay in close contact with the National Guard.

When the first phase of land reform passed on June 29, 1976, it created a forceful confrontation between the Church and the state. The dispute lasted three months, after which the government substantially "modified" its decree on land reform on October 30, 1976. This retraction was notable for creating new social movements aimed

[4] Ibid., 442.
[5] Ibid., 443.
[6] Ibid., 444.

at furthering land reform. The UCA (University of Central America) took a strong stand for the original June reform while ANEP (National Association of Private Enterprise) reacted with extreme opposition against the proposal.[7]

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On March 12, 1977, shortly after five o'clock in the afternoon, a Volkswagen Safari left a small town in El Salvador known as Aguilares.[8] In the vehicle were three people—an elderly man named Manuel Solorzano, a fifteen-year-old boy named Nelson Lemus, and Fr. Rutilio Grande, SJ. On the way out of town, near the train tracks, the vehicle stopped to give three small children a ride. They were leaving Aguilares, a small, dusty town roughly an hour north of the capital of San Salvador. Their destination was the town of El Paisnal, roughly three miles away, where Fr. Grande was travelling to continue a novena in celebration of the town's feast day. As the bell was tolling to gather the people near the small church situated in the central plaza of El Paisnal, Fr. Grande and his entourage made their way along the narrow dusty road that connected Aguilares and El Paisnal. As they passed the small village of Los Mangos, the children recall seeing groups of two or three men located on the banks of the small canals on either side of the road. Behind the VW was a small pickup truck that had followed them from Aguilares. In a low voice, Fr. Grande is quoted as saying, "We must do what God wants."[9] As the pickup came closer to the VW, a hail of bullets fell from the sky, impacting the car. Later, a doctor who examined the bodies indicated that Fr. Grande was killed by bullets coming from both the front and rear of the vehicle. The weapons and ammunition used were common to the local police. The bullets from the front of the vehicle hit Fr. Grande's jaw and neck and penetrated his skull. From the rear and left, he was shot through the lower back and pelvis. Altogether,

[7] Ibid., 508.

[8] Thomas M. Kelly, *When the Gospel Grows Feet: Rutilio Grande and the Church of El Salvador* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013) xii–xiv. This description is a direct quote from the introduction of the book.

[9] Ibid.

he was killed by twelve bullets.[10] When the bodies were found it appeared that seventy-two-year-old Manuel Solorzano tried, in vain, to protect Fr. Grande, as his body completely covered him. "Nelson sat quietly in his seat with a bullet in his forehead."[11] The three children who had been given a ride were screaming in the far back of the vehicle. A man whom they recognized ordered them to leave, which they did, full of panic. They passed by the bodies of the three others, not even seeing them. As they ran down the road toward El Paisnal, they heard one final shot.[12] Covered in blood and dirt, they did not stop running until they had arrived in El Paisnal.

Immediately, the news of these murders was transmitted to Archbishop Oscar A. Romero of San Salvador as well as to the provincial of the Society of Jesus, who also resided in the capital. Three Jesuits from the provincial office, Archbishop Romero, and his auxiliary bishop Rivera y Damas all travelled to El Paisnal. At seven o'clock President Arturo Molina called the archbishop to offer his condolences and promise a thorough investigation. Later, the newspapers would say that the archbishop had called the president first.[13] This discrepancy between the government and Church accounts of what occurred continued to be a developing theme throughout the period of violence that followed (1977–1992).

The three bodies—Rutilio Grande, Manuel Solorzano, and Nelson Lemus—were placed in front of the altar in the church of El Paisnal, and the Jesuit provincial asked that a liturgy be offered that "gives hope to the community and avoids the temptations to hatred or revenge."[14] At ten thirty that same evening, Archbishop Romero presided over Mass, which lasted until midnight. The next morning, responding to a radio announcement by the archbishop, streams of peasants began walking into El Paisnal for a nine o'clock memorial Mass. They came from near and far to mourn the death of their beloved priest and his friends.

The next Sunday, Archbishop Romero declared a "single Mass," a memorial Mass for Rutilio Grande, and the only Mass to be offered

[10] Salvador Carranza, ed., *Una Luz Grande nos Brilló: Rutilio Grande, SJ* (El Salvador: Comisión de la Compañía de Jesús, 2007), 96, translation mine.

[11] Cardenal, *Historia de una Esperanza*, 574.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Carranza, *Una Luz Grande nos Brilló*, 100.

[14] Cardenal, *Historia de una Esperanza*, 575.

in the country that day. During the final funeral procession, one which ultimately interred these bodies in the floor of the church in El Paisnal directly in front of the altar, the slogan could be heard: "Rutilio's walk with El Paisnal is like Christ's journey with the cross."[15]

As we come to the end of Rutilio's life, the following homily given by Archbishop Oscar Romero is a fitting summary to this compilation of his homilies and writings. The following words offered by a friend and "brother" portray a priest who walked with his people, suffered with his people, and ultimately died with his people. I hope the life, ministry, and death of Rutilio can inspire the Catholic Church of North America as it did the final three years of Archbishop Romero's ministry.

Homily for the Funeral Mass of Father Rutilio Grande[16]
Archbishop Oscar A. Romero
Sunday, March 14, 1977

Most excellent representative of his Holiness Pope Paul VI, dear brother bishops, priests, and the faithful.

At rare times, like this morning, the cathedral is a sign of the universal Church. It is here where the rich pastoral life of a particular church is enshrined in the pastoral life of all dioceses and of the entire world. We feel the presence of not only the living but also of these three dead bodies, which give this figure of the Church a perspective open to the Absolute, the Infinite, the greater: the universal Church, the Church greater than history and greater than human life.

The Message of the Church

Dear brothers and sisters, if this were a normal funeral I would speak here of my human and personal relationship with Fr. Rutilio Grande, who I feel is like a brother to me. In very important moments of my life he was very close to me, and I will never forget his gestures of friendship and support for me; but this moment is not for reflection

[15] Carranza, *Una Luz Grande nos Brilló*, 104.

[16] Oscar A. Romero, "Homilia en la Misa Exequial del Padre Rutilio Grande," in *Mons. Oscar A. Romero, Su Pensamiento 1–2* (San Salvador: Imprenta Criterio, 2000), 1–5.

on the personal. Rather, this is an opportunity to recognize in this body a message for all of us who follow the pilgrimage of life.

The message I want to take from this body is the same as the words of the pope, who is present here in his representative, the papal nuncio. I am grateful for this representative who gives us a figure for the unity of the Church that I am feeling in this Archdiocese, in these tragic hours; this sense of unity, like the rapidly flowering sacrifices the Church is offering.

The message of Pope Paul VI, when he speaks to us of evangelization, gives us the guideline for understanding Rutilio Grande. "What support can the Church give to this universal struggle for liberation from so much misery?" And the pope remembers the voices of bishops from the entire world at the 1974 synod, especially those bishops from the third world who clamored about "the anguish of these peoples who suffer from hunger, who live in misery, who are marginalized." And the Church cannot be absent from this struggle for liberation, this struggle to elevate and to dignify the human person. The Church must have an original message given in an original way, a message that the world may not be able to understand but one that carries the potential for victory. The pope says, "The Church offers those struggling for liberation in this world an inspiration of faith and, above all, a motivation of brotherly love. This social doctrine should be the base of its wisdom and of its existence in order to be translated into concrete commitments and actions."

A Meeting of Faith

This is the liberation of the Church. For this the pope said: "Do not confuse our sense of liberation with other movements that lack ultimate or spiritual horizons." Above all else we need an inspiration of faith, and this is Father Rutilio Grande: a priest, a Christian who in his baptism and in his priestly ordination made a profession of faith: "I believe in God the Father revealed in Christ his son, who loves us and invites us to love. I believe in a Church that is a sign of the love of God in the world, where people help each other and treat each other like brothers and sisters. An illumination of faith distinguishes this liberation from whatever other political, economic, and earthly liberation movements are out there that never move beyond ideology, of interests and of earthly reality."

Brothers and sisters, never think this gathering for the funeral of Rutilio Grande is for social, political, or economic reasons. In no way is that true. This is a meeting of faith, a faith that opens up eternal horizons as we gather around this dead body.

The Church's Liberating Struggle

The liberation that Father Grande preached was inspired by the faith, a faith that speaks to us of eternal life. Now with his face raised to heaven and accompanied by two peasants, it is evident that this faith was offered in its totality, in its perfection: This is liberation that ended in happiness in God. This liberation begins with repentance of sin, this liberation is supported in Christ, the unique force of salvation; this is the liberation that Rutilio Grande has preached, and for these reasons he has lived the message of the Church. The Church gives us people who struggle for liberation with the inspiration of faith.

Second, the Church gives a doctrine to those who struggle for liberation, which comes from its base of wisdom and its very existence: the social teaching of the Church. The social teaching of the Church says to all of us believers that the Christian religion is not only focused on the next world. It is not spiritualistic and it never forgets the misery that surrounds it. It is looking at the world with the eyes of God, and from God's point of view one's neighbor is like a brother or sister and God feels that "whatever you do to one of these, you do to me." It is a social teaching that, God willing, all sensible social movements will come to know. It is not subject to failures or a shortsightedness that cannot see beyond worldly concerns and structures. As long as a conversion of the heart is not realized, one illuminated by a faith that organizes life according to the will of God, everything will be feeble, revolutionary, transient, violent. None of these things are Christian without being animated by the true teaching that the Church preaches to all human beings. How enlightened the world would be if the social teaching of the Church was the basis for economic, political, and social activity! This was what Fr. Rutilio Grande preached. He died because he was misunderstood so many times before his assassination. The social teaching of the Church was confused with a political doctrine that is obstructing the world. The social doctrine of the Church is often viewed as subversive, which is

far from the wisdom of Church doctrine proposed as the basis of our existence.

Unity of Priest with His Bishop

Dear brother priests, the message of Fr. Rutilio Grande is of highest importance for us. Let us embrace this and let us work together by the light of this doctrine and of faith. Let us not be separated by dangerous ideologies advanced around us, by ideologies not inspired by Gospel faith. Let us give our teaching, our actions as Good Samaritans, as preachers of the commandments of Christ who is the illumination that shines in the Church as guardian of the deposit of faith. This was stated yesterday in the message of the bishops of El Salvador, and it is trying to become real in these mysterious, convulsive moments in our Republic.

Dear priests, I am happy that among the fruits of this death that we weep over, as well as other difficult circumstances at the moment, the priests cling to their bishop. The faithful understand that there is an illumination of faith that we are moving along that is distinct from other ideologies that are not of the Church in order to plant the third thing the Church offers: A motivation of love.

A motivation of love. Brothers, we should feel no sentiment for revenge here. We do not cry out for retribution here as the bishops stated yesterday. God has commanded us to love above all else, and God commands us to love others as we love ourselves. And it is certain that we have asked the authorities to investigate this crime; they have the instruments for justice in this country and will give us clarity on what happened. We are not accusing anyone. We are not offering prejudgment. We hope for a voice of impartial justice, because with a motivation of love, justice cannot be absent. True peace and true justice cannot be achieved on the basis of injustice, of violence or intrigue.

True love is what Rutilio Grande brings with his death, with two peasants next to him. Like this, the Church loves, dying with others and being present with others to the transcendence of the kingdom. The Church loves them, and it is significant that while Rutilio walked with his people in order to carry the message of the Mass and salvation, that was where he fell, riddled with bullets. Rutilio was a priest with his people, walking with his people to identify with them, in

order to live with them but not only as a revolutionary inspiration. Brothers and sisters, he was an inspiration of love, and precisely because it was for love, he was inspirational. Who knows if those responsible for this criminal act, those who have been excommunicated already, are listening on the radio there in their hideout and are hearing these words in their conscience? We want to say to our criminal brothers that we love you and we ask you to seek forgiveness from God for your own hearts, because the Church has no ability to hate; it does not have enemies. The only enemies of the Church are those who say they are enemies. But the Church loves them and dies like Christ saying: "Forgive them for they know not what they do."

The love of God inspired the actions of Rutilio Grande. Dear priests, let us embrace this precious inheritance. Those who listened to him and those who shared the ideals of Rutilio Grande—we know he was incapable of preaching hatred or inciting violence.

To Die Loving

Maybe this was why God called Rutilio Grande to martyrdom. We knew him and those who knew him know that he would never incite violence, hatred, or revenge. He died loving, and without a doubt, when he felt the first impact of those bullets that killed him, he was able to say like Christ: "Forgive them Father, they don't know, they have not understood my message of love."

My dear brothers and sisters, in the name of the archdiocese, I want to thank these collaborators of Christian liberation. I want to thank Father Grande and his two companions on pilgrimage to eternity for giving us this gathering of the Church, with all our dear priests both from here and other dioceses, in union with the Holy Father, present here in the papal nuncio, and for giving us the true dimension of our Mission. Let us not forget. We are a pilgrim Church, exposed to misunderstanding, to persecution, but a Church that walks serenely because it carries the power of love.

Yes, There Is a Solution

Brothers and sisters, Salvadorans, it may appear that there is no solution when the country is at such a crossroads. Many want to seek

solutions that are violent, and to them I say: Blessed be God who in the death of Rutilio Grande is saying to the Church: Yes, there is a solution, the solution is love, the solution is faith, the solution is not to feel the enemy is the Church. Rather, the Church is like a circle where God wants to be encountered among your brothers and sisters.

Let us understand this Church, let us be inspired by this love, let us live this faith, and let us be assured that there is a solution to our great social problems.

I want to thank, as archbishop, all who work in this kind of Christian liberation in the Church, illuminators of faith, animators of love, knowledgeable of the social doctrine of the Church.

Thank you dear brothers and sisters and all who accompany us in this hour of sorrow.

***** End of Homily *****

Commentary

> Rutilio Grande's death was to prove a defining event for the Jesuits of Central America and for the Salvadoran Church under the leadership of Monsignor Romero. For the Jesuits, the internal disputes that had so characterized the painful years since the meeting in December 1969 were silenced by a unity born of persecution. For his part, Monsignor Romero emerged from his past to lead a Church under siege, but a Church that was unified by what many began to speak of as "the miracle of Rutilio."[17]

Much has rightfully been written on the life, ministry, and death of Archbishop Oscar Romero. What has not been recognized in the English-speaking world, beyond a brief mention or a politicized sound bite, is the impact of the life, ministry, and theology of Rutilio Grande, SJ, on Romero's thought and ministry.[18] I would argue that

[17] Teresa Whitfield, *Paying the Price: Ignacio Ellacuria and the Murdered Jesuits of El Salvador* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1994), 104.

[18] There are *exceptions* to this: I would reference chapter 3 of an excellent book by Damian Zynda titled *Archbishop Oscar Romero: A Disciple Who Revealed the Glory of God* (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2010). Zynda outlines Romero's conversion as well as the concrete influence Rutilio had on Romero in careful detail in a recent chapter titled "How Far Can a Soul Ascend if It Lets Itself Be Possessed

it is much easier to understand the ministry and sacrifice of Oscar Romero with the continuity and background of his close, personal friend whom he called "a brother."[19] This will become evident from a brief commentary on the homily Romero gave at Rutilio's funeral.

Archbishop Romero's homily on the occasion of Rutilio Grande's funeral was an opportunity for him to lay out his vision for the proper role of the Church in the Salvadoran context in light of increasing violence. He was also explicitly appropriating Paul VI's apostolic exhortation titled *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Evangelization in the Modern World) as a model for ministry in his diocese. Romero saw Rutilio as someone who fulfilled that pastoral and evangelical vision. He introduced his homily with two themes that played out during his time as archbishop—both in his actions and his pastoral letters. The first theme, broadly considered, was the Church and its proper relationship to the world. The second theme was the uniquely Christian contribution the Church could make to human development.[20] In both cases, the term "liberation" was used. Both themes were framed by the question, "What does the Church provide in the universal struggle for liberation from so much misery?"[21] His response, in many ways, was a summary of the life and ministry of Rutilio, and Rutilio's ministry was embodied in Paul VI's apostolic exhortation on evangelization. It is interesting to note that Rutilio's article, "Aguilares: An Experience of Rural Parish Evangelization,"[22] was written in

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Entirely by God? Archbishop Oscar Romero: A Life Witness to the Glory of God," in *Walls of Hope: Archbishop Romero Points the Way* (Lexington, KY: Rowan & Litchfield Publishers, 2015). Douglas Marcouiller, "Archbishop with an Attitude: Oscar Romero's *Sentir con la Iglesia*," *Studies in the Spirituality of the Jesuits* 35, no. 3 (May 2003), as well as most of the material in Teresa Whitfield's *Paying the Price*. The most complete summary of Rutilio's life and work in English is the first chapter of William O'Malley's *The Voice of Blood: Five Christian Martyrs of Our Time* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1980), 3–63. Although nearly the entire chapter on Rutilio is referenced only by the "anonymous Salvadoran author of the life of Rutilio Grande" (vii), it was clearly written by someone with access to his homilies and letters.

[19] Oscar Romero, "Homilia en la Misa Exequial del Padre Rutilio Grande" (Homily in the Funeral Mass of Fr. Rutilio Grande), in *Colección Homilías y Diario de Mons. Oscar Renulfo Romero*, 2nd ed. (San Salvador: Imprenta Criterio, San Salvador, 2000), 1.

[20] For the development of these themes in a variety of ways see Oscar Romero, *Voice of the Voiceless: The Four Pastoral Letters and Other Statements*, trans. Michael J. Walsh (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004).

[21] Romero, "Homilia en la Misa Exequial del Padre Rutilio Grande," 2.

[22] This article was published in *Búsqueda*, Organ of the Pastoral Commission of El Salvador 3, no. 8 (March 1975): 21–45.

March of 1975 about a mission that took place over the previous two years. Paul VI promulgated the apostolic exhortation (EN) in December 1975. The almost identical approach to "Christian liberation" between Rutilio's lived ministry and Paul VI's vision of evangelization in EN is astonishing.

Rutilio Grande gave Archbishop Romero a lived example of how the Church could work for liberation while being consistent with the Gospel and "orthodox" in the eyes of Rome. Romero officially accepted that way of proceeding as leader of the Church of El Salvador at the funeral for his friend on March 14, 1977. It will become clear that Rutilio anticipated the direction of Church teaching almost nine months before *Evangelii Nuntiandi* was promulgated, and he lived that out in his Mission to Aguilares from 1973–1975. He did this in four concrete and particular ways.

First, Rutilio began his evangelization from the perspective that liberation can never be limited to the economic, political, or social spheres but must always include the conversion of human hearts. Second, the Church cannot ignore the economic, political, or social domains—but engaging those must begin with the Gospel. Third, the starting point for ecclesial engagement with the world mattered, and no human liberation could equal the kingdom that comes only through God's love. Fourth and finally, for Rutilio, violence could not be used in the struggle for *Christian* liberation. Romero implicitly and explicitly affirmed and extended these points both in writing and through his ministry as archbishop.

All of these points have references in the translations of this volume, but it would be helpful nevertheless to point them out. Recall that in "Violence and the Social Situation," Rutilio argued that without personal conversion, economic, political, and social change can create more harm than good. For this reason, he was crystal clear that without the inspiration of the Gospel, change is not guided by life-giving principles that address society's problems. Paul VI in his apostolic exhortation stated the same.

> With regard to the liberation which evangelization proclaims and strives to put into practice one should rather say this: it cannot be contained in the simple and restricted dimension of economics, politics, social or cultural life; it must envisage the whole person, in all his aspects, right up to and including their openness to the absolute, even the divine Absolute. (EN 33)

The personal conversion dimension of this is stated even more explicitly later in the document.

> The Church considers it to be undoubtedly important to build up structures which are more human, more just, more respectful of the rights of the person and less oppressive and less enslaving, but she is conscious that the best structures and the most idealized systems soon become inhuman if the inhuman inclinations of the human heart are not made wholesome, if those who live in these structures or who rule them do not undergo a conversion of heart and of outlook. (EN 36)

Second, the Church cannot ignore the world and needs to use the social sciences to better understand it. He argued from a traditional position of Catholic social teaching and articulated that the Church has a legitimate role in influencing the ordering of economic, political, and social realities within the context where it finds itself. This is consistent with Paul VI when he stated: "When preaching liberation and associating herself with those who are working and suffering for it, the Church is certainly not willing to restrict her mission only to the religious field and dissociate herself from human temporal problems" (EN 34).

Third, Rutilio's starting point for evangelization during his Mission in Aguilares was painstakingly careful and solidly scriptural. Church evangelization began with Scripture and read the social, economic, and political situation through that lens. Rutilio made a specific choice, without condemning the secular method employed by some of his brother Jesuits, for what he called the "religious option," and this was critical. Rutilio gave Romero a way to work for Christian liberation in a manner that was fundamentally Christian—grounded in a ministry of evangelization and emerging from Vatican II. It was not a method that emerged from Marxist political analysis. The political analysis always followed, but it never went first. This "religious option" would later be confirmed by Paul VI.

> The Church links human liberation and salvation in Jesus Christ, but she never identifies them, because she knows through revelation, historical experience and the reflection of faith that not every notion of liberation is necessarily consistent and compatible with an evangelical vision of humanity, of things and of

> events; she knows too that in order that God's kingdom should come it is not enough to establish liberation and to create well-being and development. (EN 35)

Fourth and finally, it is clear from his final two homilies in 1976 and 1977 that violence is a temptation, not an invitation, for Christian liberation. He clearly exhorted the people to whom he preached not to give in to the temptation of violence. This did not mean a lack of conflict. Similar to Jesus who generated intense conflict, which ultimately led to his death, Rutilio would employ the "moral force of love" in a way that was powerful and effective. Toward the end of his final homily, Rutilio summed up his perspective on violence: "Do not take anyone's life. Do not put your foot on the neck of any person, dominating them, humiliating them. In Christianity one must be willing to give his or her life in service for a just order, in order to save others, for the values of the Gospel."[23] Nine months later in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, he would state virtually the same point.

> The Church cannot accept violence, especially the force of arms—which is uncontrollable once it is let loose—and indiscriminate death as the path to liberation, because she knows that violence always provokes violence and irresistibly engenders new forms of oppression and enslavement which are often harder to bear than those from which they claimed to bring freedom. We said this clearly during our journey in Colombia: "We exhort you not to place your trust in violence and revolution: that is contrary to the Christian spirit, and it can also delay instead of advancing that social uplifting to which you lawfully aspire." "We must say and reaffirm that violence is not in accord with the Gospel, that it is not Christian; and that sudden or violent changes of structures would be deceitful, ineffective of themselves, and certainly not in conformity with the dignity of the people." (EN 37)

It should be clear after this brief commentary that Rutilio's ministry and message was consistent with papal teaching. Romero was not simply employing rhetoric in his homily at the funeral. For Romero, as it was for Rutilio, the Church could not simply be "absent in this

[23] Rutilio Grande, *Homilia de Apopa*, 82–83.

struggle for liberation."[24] It must enter into the fray on behalf of the marginalized and poor in a unique way, even when such activity could be misunderstood. Second, Romero argued, by quoting Paul VI, the role of the Church in this struggle was to provide the "inspiration of faith" and a motive of "fraternal love" for liberators. The social teaching of the Church was thus offered as a gift of prudence and the basis of commitments that emerge from a motive of love.[25] When Romero argued for the Church's role in liberation, it was in *contrast* to other movements without religious horizons. The social doctrine of the Church had both horizontal and vertical dimensions, just as love of neighbor and love of God went together and could never be separated.

Questions for Discussion

(1) What did you think of the ideal priest as one who walks with the people he serves and enters into their reality, even at risk to himself?

(2) How has Catholic social teaching been misunderstood in North America when it has weighed in on social, economic, or political issues?

(3) Do you believe that love can be a moral force in contemporary US society? Why or why not?

(4) After reading the writings and homilies of Rutilio Grande, SJ, do you agree with Romero's interpretation of his ministry and life?

[24] Romero, "Homilia en la Misa Exequial del Rutilio Grande," 2.
[25] Ibid., 2.

CONCLUSION

Rutilio Grande, SJ, and the Church of Pope Francis

The recent apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), offers a striking number of similarities, even convergences, with the themes consistent throughout the ministry and evangelization of Rutilio Grande, SJ. Five of the seven questions Pope Francis addresses in that exhortation have direct correlations to the work and ministry of Rutilio. They include the following: the reform of the Church in her missionary outreach; the Church understood as the entire people of God, which evangelizes; the inclusion of the poor in society; peace and dialogue in society and the spiritual motivations for mission (EG 17). This conclusion will point out the similarities between the pastoral theological program of Pope Francis and the ministry and message of Rutilio Grande, SJ.

Reform of the Church in Its Missionary Outreach

Francis proposes early in *Evangelii Gaudium* that a Church that "goes forth" is "a community of disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice" (EG 24). Notice this is not an institution that waits for people to come to it and then forces them to conform to a preset ideal—no, just the opposite. The Church is like "the Father of the Prodigal Son" who runs out to welcome all those who wish to come home. This theme of "going forth" was present throughout Rutilio's priestly ministry and was

evident in three concrete ways. The first was his commitment to seminarian immersions in the mid-1960s (chaps. 1, 5). The second was his targeting and execution of the "Grand Missionary Tour" in and around Aguilares in 1972 (chaps. 3–4). The third was his framing and understanding of the priest as a servant leader, *not* the clerical center of the ecclesial community (chap. 5).

Rutilio planned and enacted an important experiment in pastoral formation in the mid-1960s (chaps. 1, 5) while he served in the leadership of the major seminary in San Salvador. During the allotted vacation time each year for seminarians, Rutilio gathered mission groups of seminarians from all over the country and immersed them into direct contact with poor rural communities.[1] The purpose of these immersions was not to prepare children for communion or to hear confessions, nor to attack Protestant groups working there. These had all been traditional motives for pastoral engagement. The purpose was to immerse seminarians into the reality of the peoples they would serve. While this immersion may not seem radical to an observer today, it was radical for seminarian preparation at the time. One major fruit of this experiment was that working in pastoral teams and utilizing teamwork caused a notable transformation for seminarians in the spirituality of living out their vocations. In each of these missions, Jesuits joined the immersions and accompanied the seminarians.

Prior to leaving on these immersions, Rutilio prepared seminarians for four days while still at the seminary. He began with an intense atmosphere of personal and communal prayer. The success of the Mission would be realized from this commitment to prayer, as it was oriented toward the service of poor communities. "In the Eucharistic celebration, each seminarian participating made an offering of money to the poor."[2] Rutilio then organized them into five work groups, with each group covering a particular, predetermined zone of the community. In each group there were theologians, philosophers, and

[1] Some of this material is drawn from Thomas Kelly, *When the Gospel Grows Feet: Rutilio Grande, SJ, and the Church of El Salvador* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013), chap. 5.

[2] Rodolfo Cardenal, *Historia de una Esperanza: Vida de Rutilio Grande* (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 2002), 105.

roughly eighteen to twenty seminarians. Each Team had a leader, an assistant, and people with a variety of pastoral experiences.

"The essential principle of the village Mission was to offer the perspective of service and humility to the community of Quezaltepeque."[3] Rutilio carefully instructed the Mission Teams that the purpose of their Mission was not to teach a system of abstract doctrine or moral theology but first to announce that Christ is present, real, and alive. The purpose was explained this way: "the first contact with the people was to be characterized by a human encounter, to try to enter into their reality in order to leave with a common reality."[4] The principal objective of the catechesis was to bring about an experience of the living God for the people where they lived.

The Missions began with a visit to nearly every living space in the community, greeting people, and getting to know the area. At times the seminarians played sports with the people, but the purpose was to get to know them and the reality they lived by simply spending time with them. The Mission Group would meet daily after common prayer to evaluate and plan activities for that day. At each meeting, the group members reviewed the stages of engagement with the community, agreed to the norms of engagement, and discussed various points of view and any difficulties that arose. The group divided up work between subgroups of seminarians responsible for areas such as liturgy, sports, and catechism. On the whole, seminarians carried the weight of the Mission, while priests advised and empowered.[5] The general scheme of the Mission integrated catechesis in the morning with the children of the parish, prearranged visits to homes of parishioners by pairs of seminarians in the afternoons, and established the formation of youth groups as well as groups of catechists in the evenings. Eucharistic ministers and lectors were also educated in all five zones of the community. And finally, the evening included ministry for adults, offering catechesis appropriate to age and gender.[6]

[3] Ibid. Quezaltepeque is located about fifteen km from San Salvador in the municipality of La Libertad.

[4] Ibid., 105.

[5] Ibid., 106.

[6] Ibid.

Rutilio taught the seminarians through these immersion missions that the Church and its priestly ministry must meet people in their real lives, where they live, work, and play. God is experienced there in the daily lives of parishioners. It is in the real world where the mission of the Church is realized, not simply in the church building. Although these mission groups met with great success in the years 1965–1967, the bishops disliked losing contact with their seminarians during the weeks of vacation. According to Rodolfo Cardenal, the bishops, for whatever reason, wanted the seminarians working on the pastoral needs in their own dioceses. So the immersion missions came to an abrupt end. But through these immersions, Rutilio learned some very important lessons, such as the importance of real contact with those served.

Second, although there were numerous parishes throughout the archdiocese of San Salvador, the majority of the clergy served those in the city who were financially better off. Part of the discernment of the Missionary Tour was to serve the "majority" who had been neglected. From the very beginning of his outreach, Rutilio made it clear that the Mission Team would have to choose which sector of the population to focus its evangelization on. "At the foundation of this experience there is a fundamental option by all the members of the Team for a pastoral ministry focused on the marginalized majorities. Such majorities are crystallized in the suburban and rural masses."[7] The motivation of the Team was clear: most clergy at the time served the wealthy minority. For this reason, "it seemed urgent to insert us into the marginalized majorities, the poor peasants, who are the great reservoir of religious people in the country."[8]

The pastoral goals of the Jesuit Team as stated in the article relating to the evangelization of Aguilares were as follows: "Evangelization in order to recreate a Church of living communities of new people, pastoral agents conscious of their human vocation who become promoters of their own destiny and who bring change to their reality along the lines of Vatican II and Medellín." The attitude of the Team was one of humility. They realized from the beginning that they

[7] Rutilio Grande, "Aguilares: An Experience of Rural Parish Evangelization," *Búsqueda*, Organ of the Pastoral Commission of El Salvador, 3, no. 8 (March 1975): 1. Translation mine.

[8] Ibid., 2.

needed to first learn *from* the people they were going to serve if they were going to effectively impart the faith. "First we have to be conscientized by their reality through a sensitization and awareness of their world that brings us to incarnate and identify with their problems." The method they used to interact was consistent with their attitude. Such an approach does not speak the truth from above (priests) in order to be received below (laity); rather, the Team wanted their ministry to be "personalizing, dialogical, creative, and critical, based on the pattern of action-reflection-action, which theologized their reality starting from the solidarity of love, faith, and hope in this person, here and now."[9] To "theologize reality" was to view one's context through the lens of the Gospel. True evangelization with people in oppressive contexts moves away from the paternalistic imparting of knowledge (sacred or secular) or charity (donation for immediate needs) and into dialogical creativity that results in action responding to the roots of oppression. In order to do this effectively, the role of the Church shifts with "priority given to evangelization and conversion before the sacramental and cultic."[10]

Finally, Rutilio and the Mission Team wanted a different kind of priest, one who was comfortable collaborating with laypeople and who did not see laypeople as a threat. The following is a description of a priest that was common during the time immediately following Vatican II.

> Like many priests, [Fr.] Argueta benefited materially from a rural class system that kept most people subordinate to a few rural merchant and agrarian capitalist families. In Jocoaitique he ate without cost at the homes of the local elite, who increased their cultural capital by associating with him. And when he visited poor, outlying areas, he was often met at the entrance of the community by officials and welcomed with fireworks and music from a local band. For most people a visit from the region's only priest was a rare and important occasion. After Mass Argueta ate alone in a local home or the church sacristy, for no one would dare break bread with a literate man of God—nor did the priest ever invite them to do so. The community served him its richest

[9] Note the influence here not only of Medellín but also of Paulo Freire's method learned by Rutilio at the Pastoral Institute of Latin America in Quito, Ecuador.

[10] Grande, "Aguilares," 2.

> fare: chicken, eggs, cream, and milk that most peasants rarely consumed. People who required the priest's council, or wished to request a favor, usually sought out the assistance of an intermediary, whether judge, church official, the mayor, or another person of status. The priest's relationships with his "flock" were marked by paternalism exercised by large rural landowners and merchants toward peasants and rural workers. Surely Argueta was aware of the relationship between his practice and the dominant order, for on the occasion of elections he sometimes used the pulpit to urge people to vote for the National Conciliation Party (PCN), formed by the military government in 1961.[11]

The vision Rutilio had was much different and in many cases a reaction to this type of priest. As he stated in his article on the Grand Missionary Tour:

> As a team of priests we wanted to find some agreement and convergence before the glaring crisis of priestly identity. There is a spectrum of priests for everyone between the priest who only performs sacraments and the priest who only works in politics. Between these two extremes we tried to find our position.
>
> Derived from the prophetic-priestly-kingly character of the people of God, priests are ordained to serve with the ministers of the Word, through worship, and animation, charisms instituted by God for the community and mediated by it.[12]

When the identity of the priest emerged from baptism and was oriented to service of others, this created an intimacy with laypeople in the community instead of a separation. In all three of these characteristics of a reformed Church outreach, Rutilio remained "involved and supportive" and bore much "fruit." Poor agricultural communities elected their own Delegates of the Word and began to find their "voice." These communities then organized around the Word of God and worked for the kingdom in their particular context.

[11] *Landscapes of Struggle: Politics, Society, and Community in El Salvador*, ed. Aldo Lauria-Santiago and Leigh Binford (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), 108–9.

[12] See chap. 4, 67.

The Church as the Entire People of God Which Evangelizes

Without the paternalism and clericalism of the traditional model for priestly ministry, poor communities began to evangelize each other, always in concert with the priests and in communion with their bishop. Rutilio realized very early that if evangelization was to succeed, it could not succeed because priests gave good orders to a community; rather, there must be a strong horizontal dimension where laypeople lead each other and power is shared. Before the Grand Missionary Tour in 1972, he tried to appoint leaders in his own hometown of El Paisnal. He chose the most devout and pious people in the community and the evangelization largely failed. He quickly realized that if leaders did not emerge from the community itself, no outsider would have success evangelizing. He spoke of it this way:

> We think this point is of capital importance. The institution of the Church has become fossilized in the clergy. We lament the fact that we don't have true communities. And for good reason this leads us to question whether we really have a Church.
>
> Now, there is no community without responsible leaders. Here, the conflict lies. Where to begin! Do we begin with the formation of the community or with the leaders? If the matrix of the community does not exist, from where, how, and for what are leaders going to originate? Who is going to choose these leaders? Will there be true leaders or those who only have a vocation to be a sacristan? How and where will they be formed? How will the people accept them? We wanted to leave the answers to these questions to the overall Mission meeting, as we have already noted. We try to create a process that integrates and evenly develops the three dimensions of the Mission: evangelization, community, leaders.[13]

If one were to argue what was the most important pastoral-theological praxis of Rutilio, it would be his recognition that unless local leaders were empowered to lead and the entire community was involved, evangelization was dead before it began. Notably, he made a distinction between "true leaders" and those who had a vocation

[13] See chap. 3, 48.

to be a "sacristan."[14] True leaders were respected by the people, had their own opinions, and spoke their own minds. These leaders formed the basis of the ecclesial transformation begun by Rutilio.

The Inclusion of the Poor in Society

In his homily on the transfiguration, it became absolutely clear that when given the opportunity, Rutilio spoke truth to power in a way that was bold, effective, and inclusive. With the political leadership of the country gathered in front of him and the ecclesial leadership of the country behind him, he prophetically denounced the inequality of El Salvador and its failure to "transfigure" every person in the country.

> And so we return to question, is the Salvadoran person transformed? Are the immense majority of the Salvadoran people, represented by our peasants, transformed? Is the minority transformed, the one that has in its hands all the economic power, decision-making power, control of the media and means of communication?[15]

Being "inclusive of the poor" means more than praying for them during Mass or encouraging people to give them charity. Moving the Church, rich and poor alike, into the lives of those who suffer is what being inclusive of the poor means. When the Church makes them the center and purpose of its being, any and all who suffer, it embodies God's mercy in the world. I think this is what Pope Francis means when he says he wants "a Church of the poor."

Peace and Dialogue in Society

Rutilio's article *Violence and the Social Situation* was an attempt to understand the causes of violence in El Salvador in the hope of re-

[14] "Sacristans" would refer to those who thought "service" was arranging the altar and the necessary instruments of the liturgy for the priest prior to Mass and cleaning up after the Mass.

[15] See chap. 2, 28.

sponding to it with appropriate, nonviolent, structural changes. It took seriously the distribution of wealth and opportunity and tried to find in that distribution reasons for certain social realities.

> We recognize the necessity of capital that can strengthen work and wealth, and never advocate a "joyful sharing of assets" (as communism does).[16] We would like it if in El Salvador there was no armed or institutional violence. But we also recognize that according to the data given, there exists an "excessive" disproportion in the distribution of goods that could give occasion and explain, without defending, the armed violence as it does in other countries.
>
> And what matters most is not to destroy but to build. We are conscious of the complexity of the problems. We want to denounce this "excess," not to stir up people but to ask those who influence national political and economic reality to make rapid and effective efforts to improve the unjust situation of our fellow citizens.[17]

Rutilio knew that trying to analyze social reality and the cause of violence in El Salvador would make him a target of those who did not wish to acknowledge any obligation to land reform or wealth redistribution. Nevertheless, he was careful to argue for a peaceful solution and he made it clear that violence would change nothing. Furthermore, he was specifically against any approach to systemic change that only changed structures but failed to change the human hearts subject to those structures. This leads us to the final theme that Francis addressed in his apostolic exhortation.

Spiritual Motivations for Mission

Rutilio spoke at length about motivations and strategies for evangelization. Many of his fellow Jesuits were ministering to communities with what he termed the "political" or "secular" way. This way essentially taught people about the social, political, and economic structures that oppressed them and then asked them to respond to

[16] Explanation and parentheses mine.
[17] See chap. 1, 9–10.

such structures out of their faith. In many contexts it was appropriate, even constructive, but Rutilio chose another path. The "religious" way understood that, first and foremost, human liberation required evangelization. By leading with the Word of God and applying that Word to the social, political, and economic structures of oppression, Rutilio preserved the faith dimension and maintained a legitimate and justified role for the Church in integral development. Rutilio knew that while structures might change, human selfishness could remain the same and no real development would occur. He said as much in *Violence and the Social Situation*:

> The social reality of Latin America lends itself to multiple reflections, attitudes, and reactions. We would like to reflect on this reality with objectivity, with a rational attitude, and to react not only in favor of structural change but also in terms of the conversion of people who will implement these changes with disinterest and solid technical knowledge. We need people convinced of the necessity of modifying the existing structures and who will do so despite the greatest enemy—human selfishness. To change the structures alone would only promote a harmful revolution. People with preparation and disinterest have the capacity to change the necessary structures, but this must be a struggle for justice and development as well.[18]

Human development without spiritual growth will never succeed. Integral development is promoted by the Church because it constantly challenges the human being to greater generosity, self-reflection, and self-control. Without these, structures can change but abuse and oppression will continue.

Rutilio Grande, SJ, and Pope Francis both developed and came into their priestly identity in the context of the Church of Latin America. Rutilio was deeply formed by Vatican II and Medellín. Pope Francis was formed by those as well and by conferences at Puebla (1979), Santo Domingo (1992), and most recently Aparecida (2005). The numerous references to the various conferences of Latin American bishops in the pope's apostolic exhortation come close to twenty. On March 12, 2017, four years from the day the conclave chose Pope

[18] See chap. 1, 4–5.

Francis, we will celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the martyrdom of Rutilio Grande, SJ. My hope is that he is not seen as a historical icon but rather as someone who can help us understand the new life Pope Francis is breathing into the contemporary Catholic Church.

Glossary

Key Terms

Anti-kingdom. Any social, political, or economic reality that dehumanizes people.

Caritas. The theological virtue of "love."

Charity. The satisfaction of an immediate material need, sought to address the needs of the marginalized while saying very little about the *causes* of that marginalization.

Christian Base Communities (CEBs, from the Spanish *comunidad eclesial de base*). Small groups of committed Christians, normally twelve to twenty persons, who integrate biblical study and social reality. They often meet in a group member's home to read Sacred Scripture, pray, and sing hymns. The incorporation of the social reality occurs when they reflect on what the Scriptures mean in their daily lives, which frequently leads them to a course of social action to improve their living conditions. The integration of the social aspect sets a CEB apart from a normal Bible study.

Clericalism. The practice and attitude of putting ordained functionaries at the center of all decision making and community life. It is a style of leadership that occurred when the methods, agendas, and priorities of Church ministry revolved around the priest instead of the needs of the community. Under this style of leadership, the priest (usually visiting from somewhere else as the communities were too small to support their own) arrived and simply dictated how the community worshipped and what the themes of pastoral ministry would be at a given time. Rutilio calls for clericalism to be replaced by active lay involvement.

Conscientization. A method of education developed by Brazilian Paulo Freire. It occurs when an oppressed group of people both *under-*

stands a problem and then *responds* to that problem in their context. Understanding alone does not constitute conscientization; it must be accompanied by action.

Diakonia. A commitment to change the world by service and ministry to others. It is the evangelization of actual experience.

Evangelization. The proclamation of the Gospel in response to the command of Jesus: "Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15). The Catholic Church understands evangelization to be a task entrusted to all Christians, since it is not only what they say but also the way they live that bears witness to the values they profess.

Fatalism. When a person is resigned to reality as it exists, with no possibility of changing it. The belief that it is God's will that people live the way they do and therefore that people should not attempt to change the social injustices.

Fiesta of Corn. A festival where the "coexistence and creativity of the community" was celebrated around the main food staple in El Salvador, corn.

Individualism. Social theory favoring freedom of action for individuals over communal concerns. In extreme cases (certain strands of libertarianism) no reality beyond the individual exists, such as the common good. State activity is seen as an effort to coerce and control, and concerns of the common good are ignored.

Integral development. A term coined by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical *Populorum progressio*. It signifies that human development—something that economics and politics also aims at—is not simply the development of social, political, or economic units but is the development of entire persons and all people. As a result, integral human development requires the development of all the aspects of the person, and peoples, including the spiritual dimension.

Justice. Addresses the systemic causes of marginalization, poverty, and suffering. It addresses the reasons *why* social problems exist and how to eradicate them.

Kerygmatic. A Greek word used in the New Testament to mean to preach or to proclaim. The early Church believed the power of preaching and proclaiming the Good News, the Gospel, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, to be a source and advocate of faith.

Kingdom of God. Where God's will for humanity and human actions on earth coincide and humanize all people. This is often referred to as both "already" and "not yet," meaning that Jesus initiated the kingdom of God but it has yet to be fulfilled. It is *not* to be understood as synonymous with "heaven," but rather as an obligation of Christians to participate in bringing about and promoting the kingdom of God here and now in our world.

Koinonia. To make a community of faith. This is catechetical-liturgical evangelization, meaning to proclaim the Gospel in regards to religious instruction about the liturgy.

Machismo. The domination of male over female in a variety of ways throughout Latin America. Often it is present in family structure, job possibilities, social interactions, and political marginalization. One common manifestation is the widespread acceptance of male infidelity.

Magnificat. The hymn of the Virgin Mary found in Luke 1:46-55. For Rutilio, Mary was a model of generosity, not a vainglorious queen. She had come to serve her cousin Elizabeth very concretely prior to the conclusion of her pregnancy, and it was this service that distinguished her. Parallels Song of Hannah in 1 Samuel 2:1-10.

Medellín. A council of the Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM, from the Spanish *El **C**onsejo **E**piscopal **L**atino **Am**ericano*) held in 1968 in Medellín, Colombia. It addressed how the results of the Second Vatican Council should be implemented in Latin America. It was through this conference that there was an agreement that the Church should recognize a preferential option for the poor where there was the responsibility of the Church to liberate the people from poverty.

Metanoia. Conversion of personal attitude toward the kingdom of God so that God's will for humanity and human actions on earth coincide and humanize all people, a change of heart.

Paternalistic. The solving of problems by well-meaning outsiders who come in and solve short-term issues for a community. Rutilio tried to replace paternalism with servant leadership.

Praxis. Action emerging from faith that responds to one's reality; action that emerges from faith.

Second Vatican Council (Vatican II). This council was the twenty-first ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church and addressed the tension between Catholicism and the modern world. This council started with Pope John XXIII on October 11, 1962, and ended with Pope Paul VI on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 1965.

Secularism. Denoting attitudes, activities, or other things that have no religious or spiritual basis.

Servant leadership. A form of leadership formally announced during the Second Vatican Council that became the model for a new type of community at the parish level. Rutilio wanted servant leadership to replace paternalism. Its goal is to bring forth the gifts and talents of a community and to create less dependence on paternalistic figures like a mayor or parish priest. It did not see empowering laypeople as a threat to the exercise of the priestly office.

Social analysis. It is a way of analyzing society through the use of the social sciences such as sociology, anthropology, and economics.

Key Documents

Gaudium et Spes. "The Joy and Hope." This is the pastoral constitution of the Church in the modern world. It is a document of the Second Vatican Council and was written in 1965. It was the longest and final document of the council with the most votes in favor. It is one of four apostolic constitutions and addresses the pastoral role of the Catholic Church in the modern world.

Lumen Gentium. "Light of nations." This is a document of the Second Vatican Council and was written in 1964. It addressed how the Catholic Church understood itself in a "new light" and specifically put the Church in service to the kingdom of God in the world.

Mater et Magistra. "Mother and Teacher." This encyclical was written in 1961 by Pope John XXIII on Christianity and social progress. The title, "Mother and Teacher," is in reference to the role of the Church and the call to work together to promote human dignity.

Populorum Progressio. "The Development of Peoples." This encyclical was written by Pope Paul VI in 1967. It addressed the need for the global economy to serve all people rather than a few.

Rerum Novarum. "Of New Things." This encyclical was written by Pope Leo XIII in 1891 and addressed the conditions of the working class.

Key People

Archbishop Chavez y Gonzalez (1901–1987). The third archbishop of San Salvador and the immediate predecessor of Archbishop Oscar Romero. He was Archbishop of San Salvador for thirty-eight years (1938–1977). The Fiesta of Corn honored his fifty years of service as archbishop.

Archbishop Oscar Romero (1917–1980). The fourth archbishop of San Salvador who spoke out against poverty, social injustice, assassinations, and torture. He was assassinated on March 24, 1980, while saying Mass. Pope Francis declared him a martyr in February 2015, and he will be beatified in May 2015.

Fr. Bartolomeo de las Casas (1474–1566). An early Spanish historian and Dominican missionary in the Americas who wrote and testified to expose the oppression of the indigenous peoples by the European colonialists. He called for the abolition of indigenous slavery. His several works include *Historia de las Indias* (first printed in 1875).

Paulo Freire (1921–1997). A Brazilian educator who coined the term *conscientization*. *Conscientization* occurs when an oppressed group of people not only understands a problem but also takes the initiative to respond to that problem in their context. Knowledge and action together was the key to social transformation.

Pope John XXIII. Pope from 1958 to 1963. He was responsible for calling the Second Vatican Council. Pertinent encyclicals written while pope: *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher) in 1961 and *Pacem en Terris* (Peace on Earth) in 1963.

Pope Leo XIII. Pope from 1878 to 1903. Pertinent encyclicals written while pope: *Rerum Novarum* (On Capital and Labor) on May 15, 1891.

Pope Paul VI. Pope from 1963 to 1978. Pertinent encyclicals written while pope: *Populorum Progressio* (On the Development of Peoples) in 1967; *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (The New Evangelization) in 1975.

Pope Pius X. Pope from 1903 to 1914.

Pope Pius XI. Pope from 1922 to 1939.

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